



Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

State Plan 2007

Colorado Department of Human Services
Office of Adult, Disability, and Rehabilitation Services
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
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Denver, Colorado 80203

Voice and TDD: 303-866-4150



**STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM
AND
STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM**

STATE: Colorado

AGENCY: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

AGENCY TYPE: GENERAL ___ BLIND X COMBINED

SECTION 1: LEGAL BASIS AND STATE CERTIFICATIONS

- 1.1** The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (name of designated State agency or designated State unit) is authorized to submit this State plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended¹ and its supplement under title VI, part B of the Act.²
- 1.2** As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I, part B of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the Department of Human Services (name of the designated State agency)³ agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State plan⁴, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁵, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary. Funds made available under section 111 of the Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under title I and the administration of this State plan.
- 1.3** As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI, part B of the Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State plan⁶, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁷, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary. Funds made available under title VI, part B are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the title I State plan.
- 1.4** The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding this State plan and its supplement.
- 1.5** The State legally may carry out each provision of the State plan and its supplement.
- 1.6** All provisions of the State plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.

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- 1.7 The **Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** (title of State officer) has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under this State plan and its supplement.
- 1.8 The **Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** (title of State officer) has the authority to submit this State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State plan supplement for supported employment services.
- 1.9 The agency that submits this State plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.
- 1.10 The effective date of this State plan and its supplement is July 1, 2006.

 (Signature)

Nancy Smith
 (Typed Name of Signatory)

 (Date)

Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
 (Title)

- ¹ Public Law 93-112, as amended by Public Laws 93-516, 95-602, 98-221, 99-506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.
- ² Unless otherwise stated, "Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
- ³ All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
- ⁴ No funds under title I of the Act may be awarded without an approved State plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Act and 34 CFR part 361.
- ⁵ Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR part 361.
- ⁶ No funds under title VI, part B of the Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the title I State plan in accordance with section 625(a) of the Act.
- ⁷ Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR part 361, and 34 CFR part 363.

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SECTION 2: PUBLIC COMMENT ON STATE PLAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**2.1 Public participation requirements.** (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.20(a)(1) and (2), (b), and (d), and 363.11(g)(9))

- (a) The designated State agency, prior to the adoption of any policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State plan, including making any amendment to such policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the State to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures, and actively consults with the Director of the client assistance program carried out under section 112 of the Act, and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations on the policies or procedures.
- (b) The designated State agency provides adequate notice of the meetings in accordance with State law governing public meetings, or, in the absence of such State law, in accordance with procedures developed by the State agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council.

2.2 State review process. (34 CFR Part 79)

If the State plan, its supplement, or amendment to the State plan is subject to the State review process, such materials are reviewed and commented on in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12372, and comments provided by the State review process are transmitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

This State plan and its supplement are subject to the State review process.

Yes ___ No X

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SECTION 3: SUBMISSION OF THE STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT

3.1 Submittal of the State plan, its supplement, and revisions to the plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Act)

- (a) The State submits to the Commissioner a State plan for vocational rehabilitation services that meets the requirements of section 101 of the Act and a State plan supplement for supported employment services that meets the requirements of section 625 of the Act on the same date that the State submits a State plan under section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- (b) If the State submits a State unified plan under section 501(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 that includes the State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and its supplement for supported employment services in the unified plan, the State submits to the Commissioner the State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and its supplement for supported employment services on the same date that the State submits its unified plan under section 501(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- (c) The State submits only those policies, procedures, or descriptions required under this State plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- (d) The State submits to the Commissioner at such time and in such manner as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:
 - (1) comprehensive system of personnel development;
 - (2) assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
 - (3) innovation and expansion activities; and
 - (4) requirements under title I, part B or title VI, part B of the Act.

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- (e) The State plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of such modifications as the State determines to be necessary or as the Commissioner may require based on a change in State policy, a change in Federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Act by a Federal court or the highest court of the State, or a finding by the Commissioner of State noncompliance with the requirements of the Act, until the State submits and receives approval of a new State plan or plan supplement.

3.2 Supported employment plan. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

The State has an acceptable plan for carrying out part B of title VI of the Act, including the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under part B of title I of the Act to pay for the cost of services leading to supported employment.

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE PLAN

4.1 Designated State agency and designated State unit. (Sections 101(a)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.13)

(a) Designated State agency.

- (1) There is a State agency designated as the sole State agency to administer the State plan, or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the State by a sole local agency.
- (2) The designated State agency is:
- _____ primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities; or
- X not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities.
- (3) In American Samoa, the designated State agency is the Governor.

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(b) Designated State unit.

- (1)** If the designated State agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities, the State agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division, or other organizational unit that:
- (A)** is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities, and is responsible for the designated State agency's vocational rehabilitation program, including those responsibilities specified in subparagraph (5) of this paragraph of the State plan;
 - (B)** has a full-time director;
 - (C)** has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit;
 - (D)** is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated State agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated State agency; and
 - (E)** at a minimum, has the following responsibilities that cannot be delegated to any other agency or individual:
 - (i)** all decisions affecting eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, the nature and scope of available services, and the provision of services;
 - (ii)** a determination that an individual has ended participation in the vocational rehabilitation program and achieved an employment outcome after receiving vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (iii)** policy formulation and implementation; and
 - (iv)** allocation and expenditure of vocational rehabilitation funds.

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- (2) The name of the designated State unit is Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation .
- 4.2 **State independent commission or state rehabilitation council.** (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State plan must contain one of the following two assurances.

- (a) The designated State agency is an independent commission that:
- (1) is responsible under State law for operating, or overseeing the operation of, the vocational rehabilitation program in the State;
 - (2) is consumer-controlled by persons who:
 - (A) are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - (B) represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated State unit under the direction of the commission is the State agency for individuals who are blind;
 - (3) includes family members, advocates, or other representatives, of individuals with mental impairments; and
 - (4) undertakes the functions set forth in section 105(c)(4) of the Act;
- or**
- (b) The State has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in section 105 of the Act and the designated State unit:
- (1) jointly with the Council develops, agrees to, and reviews annually State goals and priorities, and jointly submits annual reports of progress with the Council, consistent with the provisions of section 101(a)(15) of the Act and section 4.12 of this State plan;

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- (2) regularly consults with the Council regarding the development, implementation, and revision of State policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3) includes in the State plan and in any revision to the State plan, a summary of input provided by the Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the Council, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other reports prepared by the Council, and the response of the designated State unit to such input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and
- (4) transmits to the Council:
 - (A) all plans, reports, and other information required under title I of the Act to be submitted to the Secretary;
 - (B) all policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State plan; and
 - (C) copies of due process hearing decisions issued under title I of the Act, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential.
- (c) *If the designated State unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c)* provides a summary of the input provided by the Council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this subsection of the State plan, the response of the designated State unit to the input and recommendations, and explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the state plan. (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.21(a))

The designated State agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan, the views of:

- (a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services, or in appropriate cases, the individuals' representatives;

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- (b) personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- (c) providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- (d) the Director of the client assistance program; and
- (e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council.

4.4 Non-federal share. (Section 101(a)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60(b))

The non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out this State plan is 21.3 percentum and it is provided through the financial participation by the State, or if the State elects, by the State and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.15)

- (a) The State plan provides for local administration and each local agency is under the supervision of the designated State unit and is the sole local agency responsible for the administration of the program within the political subdivision that it serves.

Yes No

- (b) *IF YES, Attachment 4.5* identifies each local agency and describes the methods each local agency uses to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with this State plan.

4.6 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Sections 101(a)(2)(A) and (4)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.25 and .26)

The State plan is in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, except in the case when:

- (a) The State unit is providing services in one or more political subdivisions of the State that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State plan and the:

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- (1) non-Federal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization, or individual; and
 - (2) services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments.
 - (3) If the State is providing services that meet the provisions of subparagraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this subsection, **Attachment 4.6(a)(3)** requests a waiver of statewideness in accordance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.26(b); or
- (b) Earmarked funds are used toward the non-Federal share and such funds are earmarked for particular geographic areas within the State contingent on the State notifying the Commissioner that it cannot provide the full non-Federal share without the use of such earmarked funds.

4.7 Shared funding and administration of joint programs. (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

- (a) The designated State agency is carrying out a joint program involving shared funding and administrative responsibility with another State agency or a local public agency to provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Yes No

- (b) *IF YES*, **Attachment 4.7(b)** describes the:

- (1) nature and scope of the joint program;
- (2) services to be provided;
- (3) respective roles of each participating agency in the provision of services and their administration; and
- (4) share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

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- (c) If the joint program provides services in one or more political subdivisions of the State, the State requests a waiver of statewideness in accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.26 and subparagraph 4.6(a)(3) of this State plan subsection.

4.8 Third-party cooperative arrangements involving funds from other public agencies (Section 12 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.28)

- (a) The designated State unit has entered into a third-party cooperative arrangement for providing or administering vocational rehabilitation services with another State agency or a local public agency that is furnishing part or all of the non-Federal share.

Yes X No ___

- (b) **IF YES:**

- (1) The services provided by the cooperating agency are not the customary or typical services provided by that agency but are new services that have a vocational rehabilitation focus or are existing services that have been modified, adapted, expanded, or reconfigured to have a vocational rehabilitation focus.
- (2) The services provided by the cooperating agency are only available to applicants for, or recipients of, services from the designated State unit.
- (3) Program expenditures and staff providing services under the cooperative arrangement are under the administrative supervision of the designated State unit.
- (4) All State plan requirements, including the State's order of selection, if an order is in effect, apply to all services provided under the cooperative program.
- (c) If the third-party cooperative program provides services in one or more political subdivisions of the State, the State requests a waiver of statewideness in accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.26 and subparagraph 4.6(a)(3) of this State plan.

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4.9 Cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23 and .24)**(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide workforce investment systems.**

The designated State agency has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide workforce investment system of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 101(a)(11)(A) of the Act.

(b) Replication of cooperative agreements.

The designated State agency replicates the cooperative agreement identified in paragraph (a) of this subsection of the State plan at the local level between individual offices of the designated State unit and local entities carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system.

(c) Interagency cooperation with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.9(c) describes the:

- (1)** interagency cooperation with, and utilization of the services and facilities of the Federal, State, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and State use contracting programs, to the extent that such agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system;
- (2)** coordination, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 4.9(d) of this subsection, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3)** manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 5.6(b) of the State plan; and,
- (4)** efforts of the designated State agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for

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individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the requirements of subsection 7.5 of the supplement to this State plan.

(d) Coordination with education officials.

Plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between the designated State agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under this State plan are described in **Attachment 4.9(c)(2)** which also includes information on a formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:

- (1)** consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
- (2)** transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- (3)** the roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
- (4)** procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(e) Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.

The designated State unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under section 705 of the Act, and the independent living centers described in part C of title VII of the Act within the State have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

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(f) **Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.**

- (1) There is in the State a recipient(s) of a grant under part C of title I of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near Federal and State reservations.

Yes X No

- (2) *IF YES*, the designated State agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement with each grant recipient in the State that receives funds under part C of title I of the Act. The agreement(s) describes strategies for collaboration and coordination in providing vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities, including:
- (A) strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
 - (B) procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and who are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - (C) provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

(g) **Reciprocal referral services with a separate agency for individuals who are blind.**

In those States in which there is a separate designated State unit for individuals who are blind and also a designated State unit for all other individuals with disabilities, the two State units:

- (1) have established reciprocal referral services;
- (2) use each other's services and facilities to the extent feasible;

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- (3) jointly plan activities to improve services in the State for individuals with multiple impairments, including visual impairments; and
- (4) otherwise cooperate to provide more effective services, including, if appropriate, entering into a written cooperative agreement.

4.10 Methods of administration. (Sections 101(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (c))

(a) General.

The State agency employs methods of administration found by the Commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of this State plan.

(b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated State agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the State, who are in receipt of assistance under title I of the Act, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in section 503 of the Act.

(c) Written standards for providers of services.

The designated State agency has established, maintains, makes available to the public, and implements written minimum standards for the various types of providers used by the designated State unit in providing vocational rehabilitation services under this State plan.

(d) Facilities.

Facilities used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State plan comply with the provisions of the Act entitled "An Act to insure that certain buildings financed with Federal funds are so designed and constructed as to be accessible to

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the physically handicapped", approved on August 12, 1968 (commonly known as the "Architectural Barriers Act of 1968"), with section 504 of the Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

4.11 Comprehensive system of personnel development. (Section 101(a)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

- (a) The designated State agency has implemented a comprehensive system of personnel development that meets the requirements of section 101(a)(7) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.18.
- (b) **Attachment 4.11(b)** describes the designated State agency's policies, procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit. The description addresses the following requirements:
 - (1) collection and analysis on an annual basis of data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.18(a);
 - (2) plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain qualified personnel, including personnel from minority backgrounds, and personnel who are individuals with disabilities;
 - (3) establishment and maintenance of personnel standards meeting the requirements of 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that personnel, including professionals and paraprofessionals, are adequately trained and prepared, including:
 - (A) standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - (B) to the extent that such standards are not based on the highest requirements in the State applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the State is currently taking and the steps the State plans to take to retrain or

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hire personnel within the designated State unit so that such personnel meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the State;

- (4) standards to ensure the availability of personnel within the designated State unit or other individuals who are, to the maximum extent feasible, trained to communicate in the native language or mode of communication of an applicant or eligible individual;
- (5) staff development to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training; and
- (6) coordination of its personnel development system with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.12 Annual state goals and reports of progress. (Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

(a) Assessments and estimates.

- (1) **Attachment 4.12(a)** documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted by the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the State has such a Council) every 3 years, and:
 - (A) describes the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:
 - (i) individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - (ii) individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State plan; and

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- (iii) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, as identified by such individuals and personnel assisting such individuals through the components.
 - (B) provides an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State.
 - (2) For any year in which the State revises the assessments, the designated State unit submits to the Commissioner a report containing information regarding revisions to the assessments.

(b) **Annual estimates.**

The designated State agency annually submits **Attachment 4.12(b)** that includes, State estimates of the:

- (1) number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services under this State plan;
- (2) number of such individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under part B of title I of the Act and under part B of title VI of the Act, including, if the designated State agency uses an order of selection in accordance with paragraph 6.4(c) of this State plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
- (3) costs of the services described in subparagraph (1), including, if the designated State agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

(c) **Goals and priorities.**

- (1) **Attachment 4.12(c)(1)** identifies the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs and also identifies any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the State revises the goals and priorities.
- (2) **Order of selection.**

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- (A) If the State agency is operating on an order of selection, **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(A)** shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services and provides a justification for the order, the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category consistent with the provisions of paragraph 6.4(c) of this State plan.
- (B) If, however, the agency assures in paragraph 6.4(a) of this State plan that it can provide the full range of services identified in subsection 5.1 of this State plan to all eligible individuals, **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(B)** satisfies all of the provisions identified in paragraph 6.4(b) of the State plan.

(3) Goals and plans for distribution of title VI, part B funds.

Attachment 4.12(c)(3) specifies, consistent with subsection 7.4 of the State plan supplement, the State=s goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(4) Basis.

The goals and priorities are based on:

- (A) the analysis of the comprehensive assessment and any revisions in the assessment consistent with the provisions of paragraph 4.12(a) of this State plan;
- (B) the performance of the State on the standards and indicators established under section 106 of the Act; and
- (C) other available information on the operation of the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs, including reports from the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and the findings of monitoring activities carried out by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

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- (5) In accordance with the provisions of section 101(a)(15)(C)(ii) and (iii) of the Act, the goals and priorities, including any revisions to the goals and priorities, are jointly developed, agreed to, and reviewed annually by the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council.

(d) Strategies.

Attachment 4.12(d) describes the strategies, including those identified in section 101(a)(15)(D) of the Act and the innovation and expansion activities of paragraph 4.13(a) of this State plan, the designated State agency will use to:

- (1) address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph (a) of this subsection and achieve the goals and priorities identified in paragraph (c) of this subsection;
- (2) carryout outreach activities to identify and serve individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities consistent with the provisions of subsection 7.6 of the State plan supplement; and
- (3) overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) Evaluation and reports of progress.

Attachment 4.12(e) describes the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, and includes an annual joint report of the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council, to the Commissioner on the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year. The description includes:

- (1) an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in subparagraph (c) of this subsection plan were achieved;
- (2) an identification of the strategies that contributed to achieving the goals;
- (3) to the extent to which the goals were not achieved, an explanation of the factors that impeded that achievement;

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- (4) an assessment of the performance of the State on the standards and indicators established pursuant to section 106 of the Act; and
- (5) a report consistent with paragraph 4.13(c) of this State plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Act)

- (a) The designated State agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Act:
 - (1) for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment and goals and priorities of the State identified in paragraphs 4.12(a) and (c) of this State plan; and
 - (2) to support the funding of the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under section 105(d)(1) of the Act, and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under section 705(e)(1) of the Act.
- (b) **Attachment 4.12(d)** describes how the reserved funds identified in paragraph (a) of this subsection of this State plan will be utilized.
- (c) **Attachment 4.12(e)** describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.14 State-imposed requirements. (Section 17 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.39)

The designated State unit identifies upon request those regulations and policies relating to the administration or operation of its vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs that are State-imposed, including any regulations or policy based on State interpretation of any Federal law, regulations, or guidelines.

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4.15 Protection, use, and release of personal information. (Sections 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.38)

The designated State agency and the designated State unit have policies and procedures that are consistent with the provisions in 34 CFR 361.38 to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information, including photographs and lists of names.

4.16 Mediation and impartial due process hearing. (Section 102(c) of the Act)**(a) Fair hearing board.**

There is a fair hearing board, established by the State prior to January 1, 1985, that is authorized under State law to review determinations or decisions made under the Act and to carry out the responsibilities of the impartial hearing officer.

Yes__ No X

(b) Mediation and review procedures.

IF THE ANSWER TO (a) IS ANO@:

- (1) The designated State agency has established procedures consistent with the requirements of section 102(c) of the Act for mediation of and procedures for the review through an impartial due process hearing of determinations made by personnel of the designated State unit that affect the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to applicants or eligible individuals.
- (2) **Attachment 4.16(b)(2)** contains the procedures for mediation; the procedures for review through an impartial due process hearing; and, the procedures to seek an impartial review of the decision of the hearing officer, including the standards for

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reviewing decisions of an hearing officer, if the designated State agency has elected to implement such review procedures.

IF THE ANSWER TO (a) IS AYES@:

- (1) The designated State agency has established procedures consistent with the requirements of section 102(c) of the Act for mediation of determinations made by personnel of the designated State unit that affect the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to applicants or eligible individuals.
- (2) **Attachment 4.16(b)(2)** contains the procedures for mediation.

4.17 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

- (a) The designated State unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the Commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State plan.
- (b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and ensures the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

SECTION 5: SCOPE OF THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM

5.1 Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities. (Section 103(a) of the Act)

Vocational rehabilitation services provided under this State plan are any services described in an individualized plan for employment necessary to assist an individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining an employment outcome that is

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consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including:

- (a) an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
- (b) counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of section 102(d) of the Act and subsection 5.3 of this State plan;
- (c) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through agreements developed under section 101(a)(11) of the Act and subsection 4.9 of this State plan, if such services are not available under this State plan;
- (d) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
- (e) vocational and other training services, including the provision of personal and vocational adjustment services, books, tools, and other training materials, except that no training services provided at an institution of higher education shall be paid for with funds under this State plan unless maximum efforts have been made by the designated State unit and the individual to secure grant assistance, in whole or in part, from other sources to pay for such training;
- (f) to the extent that financial support is not readily available from a source (such as through health insurance of the individual or through comparable services and benefits consistent with section 101(a)(8)(A) of the Act and subsection 6.8 of this State plan), other than the designated State unit, diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental impairments, including:
 - (1) corrective surgery or therapeutic treatment necessary to correct or substantially modify a physical or mental condition that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment, but is of such a nature that such correction or modification may reasonably be expected to eliminate or reduce such impediment to employment within a reasonable length of time;
 - (2) necessary hospitalization in connection with surgery or treatment;

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- (3) prosthetic and orthotic devices;
- (4) eyeglasses and visual services as prescribed by qualified personnel who meet State licensure laws and who are selected by the individual;
- (5) special services (including transplantation and dialysis), artificial kidneys, and supplies necessary for the treatment of individuals with end-stage renal disease; and
- (6) diagnosis and treatment for mental and emotional disorders by qualified personnel who meet State licensure laws;
- (g) maintenance for additional costs incurred while participating in an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs or while receiving services under an individualized plan for employment;
- (h) transportation, including adequate training in the use of public transportation vehicles and systems, that is provided in connection with the provision of any other service described in this subsection and needed by the individual to achieve an employment outcome;
- (i) on-the-job or other related personal assistance services provided while an individual is receiving other services described in this subsection;
- (j) interpreter services provided by qualified personnel for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and reader services for individuals who are determined to be blind, after an examination by qualified personnel who meet State licensure laws;
- (k) rehabilitation teaching services, and orientation and mobility services, for individuals who are blind;
- (l) occupational licenses, tools, equipment, and initial stocks and supplies;
- (m) technical assistance and other consultation services to conduct market analyses, develop business plans, and otherwise provide resources, to the extent such resources are authorized to be provided under the statewide workforce investment system, to eligible

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individuals who are pursuing self-employment or telecommuting or establishing a small business operation as an employment outcome;

- (n) rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices;
- (o) transition services for students with disabilities that facilitate the achievement of the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
- (p) supported employment services;
- (q) services to the family of an individual with a disability necessary to assist the individual to achieve an employment outcome; and
- (r) specific post-employment services necessary to assist an individual with a disability to retain, regain, or advance in employment.

5.2 Written policies governing the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. (Sections 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.50)

- (a) The State unit has written policies covering the nature and scope of each of the vocational rehabilitation services specified in section 103(a) of the Act and subsection 5.1 of this State plan and the criteria under which each service is provided.
- (b) The policies are consistent with the provisions in 34 CFR 361.50 and:
 - (1) ensure that the provision of services is based on the rehabilitation needs of each individual as identified in that individual's individualized plan for employment; and
 - (2) do not establish any arbitrary limits on the nature and scope of services to be provided to the individual to achieve an employment outcome.

5.3 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Act)

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Applicants and eligible individuals, or, as appropriate, the applicants' representatives or the individuals' representatives, are provided information and support services to assist the applicants and eligible individuals in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of section 102(d) of the Act.

5.4 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Act)

Except as otherwise provided in part C of title I of the Act, the designated State unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State to the same extent as the designated State agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the State.

5.5 Scope of vocational rehabilitation services to groups of individuals with disabilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.49, .61 and .62)

(a) The State plan provides for the following optional vocational rehabilitation services for the benefit of groups of individuals with disabilities.

- (1) X The establishment, development, or improvement of community rehabilitation programs, including, under special circumstances, the construction of a community rehabilitation facility, that are used to provide services to promote integration and competitive employment.

If the State elects to use the authority to construct a facility for a community rehabilitation program, the following requirements are met:

- (A) The Federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the State's allotment under section 110 of the Act for that fiscal year.
- (B) The provisions of section 306 of the Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.

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- (C) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated State agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services, other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.
- (2) ___ Telecommunications systems, including telephone, television, satellite, radio, and similar systems, that have the potential for substantially improving service delivery methods of activities described in this section of this State plan and developing appropriate programming to meet the particular needs of individuals with disabilities.
- (3) ___ Special services to provide nonvisual access to information for individuals who are blind, including the use of telecommunications, Braille, sound recordings, or other appropriate media; captioned television, films, or video cassettes for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; tactile materials for individuals who are deaf-blind; and other special services that provide information through tactile, vibratory, auditory, and visual media.
- (4) ___ Technical assistance and support services to businesses that are not subject to title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and that are seeking to employ individuals with disabilities.
- (5) X Small business enterprises operated by individuals with significant disabilities, the operation of which can be improved by the management services and supervision of the designated State agency, along or together with the acquisition by the designated State agency of vending facilities or other equipment and initial stocks and supplies.
- (A) If the State unit provides small business enterprise services, only individuals with significant disabilities are selected to participate in this supervised program.
- (B) If the State unit sets aside funds from the proceeds of the operation of the small business enterprises, it has a description of the methods used in setting aside funds and the purposes for which funds are set aside.
- (C) Under its small business enterprises, the State unit provides:
- (i) X only the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program;

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- (ii) only a program or programs other than the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program;
 - (iii) both the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program and another program(s).
- (6) Consultative and technical assistance services to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including employment.
- (7) Other services that promise to contribute substantially to the rehabilitation of a group of individuals but that are not related directly to the individualized plan for employment of any one individual with a disability.
- (b) If the State plan provides for any of these services to groups of individuals with disabilities, the designated State unit has:
 - (1) written policies covering the nature and scope of each of the vocational rehabilitation services it provides and the criteria under which each service is provided; and
 - (2) information to ensure the proper and efficient administration of those services in the form and detail and at the time required by the Secretary, including:
 - (A) the types of services provided;
 - (B) the costs of those services; and
 - (C) to the extent feasible, estimates of the numbers of individuals benefiting from those services.

5.6 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

(a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.

The designated State agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under part A of title VI

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of the Act, upon the determination by the designated State agency that such for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide such vocational rehabilitation services than non-profit agencies and organizations.

(b) Cooperative agreements with private non-profit organizations.

The manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers is described in **Attachment 4.9(c)(3)**.

SECTION 6: ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

6.1 Record of services. (Section 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.47)

The designated State unit maintains for each applicant or eligible individual a record of services that satisfies the requirements of 34 CFR 361.47.

6.2 Referrals and applications. (Sections 101(a)(6)(A) and 102(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.41)

- (a)** The designated State unit has standards for the prompt and equitable handling of referrals of individuals for vocational rehabilitation services. These standards include timelines for making good faith efforts to inform individuals of application requirements and to gather information necessary to initiate an assessment to determine eligibility and priority of services.
- (b)** Once an individual has submitted an application for vocational rehabilitation services, an eligibility determination is made within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 60 days, unless:
- (1)** exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the designated State unit preclude making an eligibility determination within 60 days and the designated State unit and the individual agree to a specific extension of time; or
 - (2)** the designated State unit is exploring an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacities to perform in work situations under section 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act.

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6.3 Information and referral services. (Section 101(a)(20) of the Act)

The designated State agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment, and are appropriately referred to Federal and State programs, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system in the State.

6.4 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

- (a) The designated State unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Act and subsection 5.1 of this State plan, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services.

Yes No X

- (b) ***IF YES***, Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(B) contains an explanation that satisfies the requirements of 34 CFR 361.36(a)(2) or (3) and describes how, on the basis of the designated State unit's projected fiscal and personnel resources and its assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant disabilities within the State, it will:

- (1) continue to provide services to all individuals currently receiving services;
- (2) provide assessment services to all individuals expected to apply for services in the next fiscal year;
- (3) provide services to all individuals who are expected to be determined eligible in the next fiscal year; and
- (4) meet all program requirements.

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(c) **IF NO:**

- (1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
- (2) **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(A)** contains:
 - (A) the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - (B) a justification for the order of selection.
- (3) Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria are provided access to the services provided through the designated State unit's information and referral system implemented under section 101(a)(20) of the Act and subsection 6.3 of this State plan.

6.5 Assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services. (Sections 7(2)(A)(i) and (D), 7(20)(A), 101(a)(12) and 102(a)(1)(A), (2)(B) and (4) of the Act)

- (a) To determine whether an individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and the individual's priority under an order of selection for services, if the State is operating under an order of selection, the designated State unit, to the maximum extent possible consistent with the requirements of this State plan, uses existing and current information, including information available from other programs and providers, particularly information provided by education officials and the Social Security Administration, and information provided by the applicant and the family of the applicant.
- (b) To the extent that existing information is unavailable or insufficient, the designated State unit provides appropriate assessment activities to obtain necessary additional information to make the determination regarding the applicant's eligibility, and, if applicable, the applicant's priority under an order of selection.
- (c) The State unit's determination of an applicant's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services is based only on the following requirements.

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- (1) A determination that the applicant has a physical or mental impairment.
 - (2) A determination that the applicant's physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.
 - (3) A presumption, in accordance with section 102(a)(2)(A) of the Act and paragraph (d) of this subsection of the State plan, that the applicant can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.
 - (4) A determination that the applicant requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.
- (d) The designated State unit presumes that an applicant who meets the eligibility requirements in subparagraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this subsection of this State plan can benefit in terms of an employment outcome unless the designated State unit can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services due to the severity of the individual's disability. In making such a demonstration, the designated State unit first explores the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations through the use of trial work experiences consistent with the provisions of sections 7(2)(D) and 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act.
- (e) If there is appropriate evidence that establishes the applicant's eligibility for Social Security benefits under Title II or Title XVI of the Social Security Act, the designated State unit:
- (1) presumes the applicant to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services under this State plan (provided that the individual intends to achieve an employment outcome consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual) unless the designated State unit can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services due to the severity of the disability of the individual in accordance with the provisions of section 102(a)(2) of the Act and paragraph 6.5(d) of this State plan; and
 - (2) considers the applicant to be an individual with a significant disability consistent with the provisions of section 7(21)(A) of the Act.

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- (f) In the application of the eligibility criteria, the following requirements are met.
- (1) No duration of residence requirement is imposed that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State.
 - (2) No applicant or group of applicants is excluded or found ineligible solely on the basis of the type of disability.
 - (3) The eligibility requirements are applied without regard to the age, gender, race, color, creed, or national origin of the applicant.
 - (4) The eligibility requirements are applied without regard to the particular service needs or anticipated cost of services required by an applicant or the income level of an applicant or applicant's family.

6.6 Procedures for ineligibility determination. (Section 102(a)(5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.43)

If the State unit determines that an applicant is ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services or determines that an individual receiving services under an individualized plan for employment is no longer eligible for services, the State unit:

- (a) makes the determination only after providing an opportunity for full consultation with the individual or, as appropriate, with the individual's representative;
- (b) informs the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, in writing, supplemented as necessary by other appropriate modes of communication consistent with the informed choice of the individual, of the ineligibility determination, including:
 - (1) the reasons for the determination; and
 - (2) the description of the means by which the individual may express, and seek remedy for, any dissatisfaction with the determination, including the procedures for the review by an impartial hearing officer consistent with the provisions of section 102(c) of the Act and subsection 4.16 of this State plan;

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- (c) provides the individual with a description of services available from the client assistance program and information on how to contact that program; and
- (d) reviews any ineligibility determination that is based on a finding that the individual is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services within 12 months and annually thereafter, if such a review is requested by the individual or, if appropriate, by the individual's representative, except when the:
 - (1) individual has refused the review;
 - (2) individual is no longer present in the State;
 - (3) individual's whereabouts are unknown; or
 - (4) individual's medical condition is rapidly progressive or terminal.

6.7 Closure without ineligibility determination. (Sections 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.44)

The State unit does not administratively close an applicant's record of services prior to making an eligibility determination unless the:

- (a) applicant declines to participate in, or is unavailable to complete an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services; and
- (b) State unit has made a reasonable number of attempts to contact the applicant or, if appropriate, the applicant's representative to encourage the applicant's participation.

6.8 Availability of comparable services and benefits. (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

- (a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (d) of this subsection, to an eligible individual, or to members of the individual's family, the State unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.

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- (b) If comparable services or benefits exist under any other program and are available to the eligible individual at the time needed to achieve the provisions of the individual's individualized plan for employment, the State unit uses those comparable services or benefits to meet, in whole or in part, the cost of vocational rehabilitation services.
- (c) If comparable services or benefits exist under any other program, but are not available to the individual at the time needed to satisfy the provisions of the individual's individualized plan for employment, the State unit provides vocational rehabilitation services until those comparable services and benefits become available.
- (d) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:
 - (1) assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
 - (2) counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of section 102(d) of the Act;
 - (3) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through agreements developed under section 101(a)(11) of the Act, if such services are not available under this State plan;
 - (4) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
 - (5) rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices; and
 - (6) post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.
- (e) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this subsection also do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:

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- (1) progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
 - (2) an immediate job placement; or
 - (3) provision of such service to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.
- (f) The Governor of the State in consultation with the designated State vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that there is an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Act between any appropriate public entity, including the State medicaid program, public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide workforce investment system, and the designated State unit so as to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in section 103(a) of the Act and subsection 5.1 of this State plan, other than the services identified in paragraph (d) of this subsection, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of such services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

6.9 Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need. (Section 12(c) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.54)

- (a) No financial needs test is applied and no financial participation is required as a condition for furnishing the following vocational rehabilitation services:
- (1) assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services, except those non-assessment services that are provided during an exploration of the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations, consistent with the requirements of sections 7(2)(D) and 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act;
 - (2) assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs;
 - (3) counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice;

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- (4) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through cooperative agreements under section 101(a)(11) of the Act and subsection 4.9 of this State plan, if such services are not available under this State plan; and
 - (5) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.
- (b) The State unit considers the financial need of eligible individuals, or individuals who are receiving services during an exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations consistent with subparagraph (1) of paragraph (a) of this subsection, in order to determine the extent of the individual's participation in the costs of vocational rehabilitation services.

Yes X No

(c) **IF YES:**

- (1) The State unit has written policies on the determination of financial need that are consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.54 and these policies:
- (A) are applied uniformly to all individuals in similar circumstances; and
 - (B) ensure that the level of the individual's participation in the cost of vocational rehabilitation services is:
 - (i) reasonable;
 - (ii) based on the individual's financial need, including the consideration of any disability-related expenses paid by the individual; and
 - (iii) not so high as to effectively deny the individual a necessary service.
- (2) **Attachment 6.9(c)(2)** specifies the services for which the designated State unit has a financial needs test.

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6.10 Development of the individualized plan for employment. (Sections 7(2)(B), 101(a)(9), and 102(b)(1) and (2) of the Act)

- (a) The designated State unit conducts an assessment to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs for each eligible individual, including the need for supported employment services, or, if the State is operating under an order of selection, for each eligible individual to whom the State is able to provide services, for the purpose of identifying the provisions to be included in the individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Act.
- (b) The development of the individualized plan for employment meets the following procedural requirements.
 - (1) The individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented in a timely manner subsequent to the determination of the eligibility of the individual for services under this State plan, except if the State is operating under an order of selection, the individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented only for individuals to whom the State is able to provide services.
 - (2) The designated State unit provides to the eligible individual or the individual's representative, in writing and in an appropriate mode of communication, information on the individual's options for the development of the individualized plan for employment, including:
 - (A) information on the availability of assistance, to the extent determined appropriate by the eligible individual, from a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor in developing all or part of the individualized plan for employment for the individual, and the availability of technical assistance in developing all or part of the individualized plan for employment for the individual;
 - (B) a description of the full range of components that must be included in an individualized plan for employment;
 - (C) as appropriate,

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- (i) an explanation of agency guidelines and criteria associated with financial commitments concerning an individualized plan for employment;
 - (ii) additional information the eligible individual requests or the designated State unit determines to be necessary; and
 - (iii) information on the availability of assistance in completing designated State agency forms required in developing an individualized plan for employment;
- (D) a description of the rights and remedies available to the eligible individual, including, if appropriate, recourse to mediation and the impartial due process hearing consistent with the provisions of section 102(c) of the Act and subsection 4.16 of this State plan; and
- (E) a description of the availability of the client assistance program and information about how to contact the program.
- (3) The individualized plan for employment is developed as a written document prepared on forms provided by the designated State unit and is developed and implemented in a manner that affords eligible individuals the opportunity to exercise informed choice in selecting an employment outcome, the specific vocational rehabilitation services to be provided under the plan, the entity that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, the settings in which the services will be provided, the employment setting, and the methods used to procure the services consistent with the provisions of section 102(d) of the Act.
- (4) The individualized plan for employment is agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, and approved and signed by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the designated State unit with a copy of the individualized plan for employment provided to the individual or, as appropriate, to the individual's representative, in writing and, if appropriate, in the native language or mode of communication of the individual or, as appropriate, of the individual's representative.

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- (5) The individualized plan for employment is reviewed at least annually by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor and the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative and amended, as necessary, by the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, in collaboration with a representative of the designated State agency or a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor, as determined to be appropriate by the individual.
- (6) If there are substantive changes in the individualized plan for employment with respect to the employment outcome, the vocational rehabilitation services to be provided, or the providers of the services, such amendments to the individualized plan for employment do not take effect until agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, and by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the designated State unit.

6.11 Mandatory components of the individualized plan for employment. (Sections 101(a)(9), 102(b)(3), and 625(b)(6)(C),(E), and (F) of the Act)

- (a) Each individualized plan for employment includes, at a minimum, the following mandatory components describing the:
 - (1) specific employment outcome that is chosen by the eligible individual, consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the eligible individual, and, to the maximum extent appropriate, results in employment in an integrated setting;
 - (2) specific rehabilitation services that are:
 - (A) needed to achieve the employment outcome, including, as appropriate, the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services, and personal assistance services, including training in the management of such services; and
 - (B) provided in the most integrated setting that is appropriate for the service involved and is consistent with the informed choice of the eligible individual;
 - (3) timelines for the achievement of the employment outcome and for the initiation of services;

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- (4) entity chosen by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, and the methods used to procure the services;
 - (5) criteria to evaluate progress toward achievement of the employment outcome;
 - (6) terms and conditions of the individualized plan for employment, including, as appropriate, information related to the:
 - (A) responsibilities of the designated State unit;
 - (B) responsibilities of the eligible individual, including those related to:
 - (i) the achievement of the employment outcome;
 - (ii) participation, if applicable, in the paying the costs of the plan; and
 - (iii) applying for and securing comparable benefits consistent with the requirements of section 101(a)(8) of the Act and subsection 6.8 of this State plan; and
 - (C) responsibilities of other entities as the result of arrangements made pursuant to comparable services or benefits requirements as identified in section 101(a)(8) of the Act and subsection 6.8 of this State plan; and
 - (7) projected need for post-employment services, as determined to be necessary.
- (b) The individualized plan for employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom an employment outcome in a supported employment setting has been determined to be appropriate also contains the identification of the:
- (1) extended services needed by the eligible individual; and

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- (2) source of the extended services or, to the extent that the source of extended services cannot be identified at the time of the development of the individualized plan for employment, the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that extended services will become available.

6.12 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938. (Section 101(a)(14) of the Act)

(a) The designated State unit:

- (1) conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State plan who has achieved an employment outcome either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)) for 2 years after the achievement of the outcome (and annually thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative), to determine the interests, priorities, and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment; and
- (2) makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations, and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in subparagraph (a)(1) in engaging in competitive employment.

(b) The individual with a disability, or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation, and acknowledges through sign-off that such review and reevaluation have been conducted.

STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

SECTION 7: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

7.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))

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The designated State agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in subsection 1.2 of the title I State plan is the State agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under title VI, part B of the Act.

7.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

Attachment 4.12(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Act and subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) of the title I State plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant disabilities and the need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

7.3 Quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))

Attachment 7.3 describes the quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services.

7.4 Goals and plans for distribution of title VI, part B funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

Attachment 4.12(c)(3) identifies the State's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act.

7.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))

Attachment 4.9(c)(4) describes the efforts of the designated State agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the State, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

7.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

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Attachment 4.12(d)(2) describes the designated State agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

7.7 Reports. (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated State agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Secretary may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under part B of title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under title I of the Act.

SECTION 8: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

8.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))

The designated State agency expends no more than five percent of the State's allotment under section 622 of the Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

8.2 Use of funds in providing services. (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))

- (a) Funds made available under title VI, part B of the Act are used by the designated State agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.
- (b) Funds provided under title VI, part B are used only to supplement, and not supplant, the funds provided under title I of the Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.
- (c) Funds provided under part B of title VI or title I of the Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under part B of title VI or title I of the Act.

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SECTION 9: PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**9.1 Scope of supported employment services.** (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(6) and (7))

- (a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in section 7(36) of the Act.
- (b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.
- (c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

9.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities. (Section 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 363.11(g)(2))

The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities, including the assessment of rehabilitation, career, and employment needs, conducted under section 102(b)(1)(A) of the Act and paragraph 6.10(a) of this State plan and funded under title I of the Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.

9.3 Individualized plan for employment. (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(3) and (5))

- (a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Act and subsections 6.10 and .11 of this State plan is developed and updated using funds under Title I.
- (b) The individualized plan for employment:
 - (1) specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
 - (2) describes the expected extended services needed; and

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- (3) identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.
- (c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other Federal or State programs.

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ATTACHMENTS REQUIRED OF ALL AGENCIES

Attachment 4.9(c): Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities

- (1) Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities
- (2) Coordination with Education Officials
- (3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers
- (4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

Attachment 4.11(b): Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Attachment 4.12 Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

- (a): Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs
- (b): Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services
- (c)(1): State=s Goals and Priorities
- (c)(3): Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
- (d): State=s Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities
- (1) To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities
- (2) To Carryout Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities
- (3) To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

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- (e): Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use Of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

Attachment 4.16(b)(2): Mediation and Impartial Due Process Hearing Procedures

Attachment 7.3: Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

ATTACHMENTS CONTINGENT ON OPTIONS SELECTED

The following attachments identified by an "X" are also submitted as part of the State plan.

- X **Attachment 4.2(c):** Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations
- Attachment 4.5:** Local Administration
- Attachment 4.6(a)(3):** Request for Waiver of Statewideness
- Attachment 4.7(b):** Shared Funding and Administration of Joint Program
- X **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(A):** Order of Selection
- Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(B):** Explanation to Support the Decision Not to Establish an Order of Selection
- X **Attachment 6.9(c)(2):** Services Subject to Financial Needs Test

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ATTACHMENT 4.2 (c)

Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

FY 2007

Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has had a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for over twenty-three years. The SRC mission statement is:

“The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides individuals with disabilities a strong substantive role in shaping the programs and services established to support their employment goals and aspirations and to provide consumers of vocational rehabilitation services a mechanism to influence at the systemic and policy level the direction of vocational rehabilitation programming.”

Colorado's SRC uses standing committees as well as ad hoc committees to conduct most of the detailed work on various issues. They use this committee structure to ensure that their goals are met through active participation of all SRC members. The standing committees include:

1. **CONSUMER SATISFACTION COMMITTEE** addresses direct access issues of the DVR consumer of vocational rehabilitation services. The committee presents reports and recommendations to the entire State Rehabilitation Council for review and confirmation. The committee is responsible for the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. The committee also cooperates with DVR in the maintenance of the Hearing Officers pool used by clients in appeals.
2. **EMPLOYMENT LINKAGE COMMITTEE** forges a partnership between businesses and vocational rehabilitation services to facilitate client transition into employment. The committee lobbies and advocates for Partners With Industry in business and industry.
3. **MEMBERSHIP/RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE** insures that membership of the SRC is in compliance with the mandates of the 1998 Rehabilitation Act. The committee also assures that members and associate members participate and contribute to the SRC and its mission. The committee recommends potential SRC members for Governor appointment and is responsible for the initial orientation and on-going training of SRC members.

Minutes are maintained of all SRC meetings and retreats, and they provide a summary of the advice and recommendations which have been provided to DVR. Each standing and ad hoc committee of the SRC is staffed by appropriate Division of Vocational Rehabilitation personnel to assure that the SRC is apprised of DVR's developing issues and to assure that the SRC has ample opportunity to provide input into DVR's administrative and program activities.

The focus of the State Rehabilitation Council's activities has been and continues to be to work with DVR in developing strategies for how the SRC can partner with and support DVR's efforts in the community, from educating the public and community advocacy organizations about the State/Federal VR program's mission and mandates, providing real stories about how DVR has helped persons with disabilities, advocating for legislative support for DVR, and to expanding DVR's employer network.

During fiscal year 2006, the SRC spent time clarifying its charge and organizing itself internally for most effective and efficient operation. Members worked together to clarify goals and objectives for the SRC, and to create steps to reach those goals. Although DVR did not receive any

recommendations during fiscal year 2006, we anticipate that we will receive them on a routine basis throughout fiscal year 2007.

ATTACHMENT 4.9 (c)

Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Entities

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ATTACHMENT 4.9 (c)(1)

Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and
With Other Entities

FY 2007

Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) cooperates with an extensive number of public and private agencies and programs, including local school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), community mental health centers and other mental health programs, community colleges, universities, county human services agencies, community centered boards serving persons with developmental disabilities, the corrections system, and other agencies. The Division's employees are integral members of many interagency teams and regularly collaborate with agencies and programs to facilitate the provision of services to its primary customers.

In all of the coordination activities throughout the State, the goal is to reduce the duplication of services and to maximize the DVR customer's opportunity to obtain an employment outcome of their choice. There are no special programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or State use contracting programs operating outside of the statewide workforce investment system in any part of Colorado.

Mental Health Programs

DVR offices work cooperatively with a number of mental health programs. The Mental Health Supported Employment Project operates under a formalized agreement between DVR and The Division of Mental Health and involves local level supported employment agreements with Adams Community Mental Health Center, Boulder County Mental Health, Larimer County Mental Health Center, Weld County Mental Health, and Midwestern Mental Health Center which covers six counties on the western slope. Services consist of job coaching, placement, and on-going support. The purpose of this project is to enhance employment opportunities for individuals with chronic mental illness (CMI). This program has resulted in increased integrated employment opportunities for these individuals.

Throughout the Region the DVR offices work with the community mental health centers serving the area. Counselors and supervisors provide orientation and training sessions for mental health center staff and their clients. Where the community mental health centers have established vocational and supported employment programs, DVR often partners with these centers to meet the needs of our mutual clients. The cooperative planning and service delivery result in improved service delivery, increased client satisfaction, and greater numbers of successful employment outcomes.

At least once annually, DVR staff meets with staff from various departments at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Pueblo (CMHIP) to provide orientation and training regarding rehabilitation eligibility and service delivery. These sessions include discussions of referral processes as well as ways to better coordinate transition of individuals from the institutionalized setting into successful community based employment outcomes.

County Human Services Agencies

DVR also cooperates with County Departments of Human/Social Services to enable disabled TANF recipients to reduce their dependency on public assistance through employment through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. This innovative program was part of a DVR initiated initiative approved by the Colorado Legislature. The coordinated effort enables DVR counselors to become specialists in services to persons with disabilities receiving

TANF benefits. The knowledge of the TANF program and benefits reduces duplication of services and provides faster and more successful delivery of needed rehabilitation services thus enabling the individual to successfully move into appropriate employment outcomes. Through cooperative agreements with matching funds, DVR, along with El Paso County Departments of Social Services and Pueblo Department of Human Services, has dedicated counseling positions to be co-located at the county facilities to make the full range of vocational rehabilitation services available to eligible individuals. Goals have been established for referrals and placements. Counselors and supervisors have increased efforts and activities with county social service agencies in working with recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), who have disability related employment issues. In Adams County, a counselor is specifically assigned to serve residents of the county who receive TANF services. Agency staff have also been involved with Colorado Dept. of Human Services' Self-Sufficiency Services, working together to improve TANF recipients access to needed services and quality employment.

School Districts, BOCES, Colleges and Universities

The School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) is established through a series of 44 contracts with local school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals between the ages of 16-25 with mild to moderate needs in employment. Services are provided through a case management model, and are community based. Services typically consist of: referral development, acquiring diagnostic information, vocational goal development, counseling and guidance, placement, work adjustment training, job seeking skills training, job coaching and one-year of post-status 26 closure follow-up support. Each supervisory district has multiple SWAP contracts. 143 of Colorado's 176 school districts are currently involved in operating a SWAP partnership within the local communities that are established within those districts. On average, over 3,000 youth are served each year through SWAP. It is anticipated that SWAP will expand into three additional sites within the next year, which will involve over 148 of Colorado's school districts. The SWAP effort has increased awareness of the existence of DVR among educators and has resulted in increased numbers of students being referred to DVR for services. The increased service delivery has also increased the number of individuals obtaining successful employment outcomes. Interest in expanding the number of educational units participating in the SWAP continues to grow.

Colorado Youth WINS (Work Incentive Network of Supports) is a five-year Youth Transition Process Demonstration (YTPD) funded by Social Security Administration starting September 30, 2003. The Demonstration is led by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center's (UCHSC) WIN Partners. The overarching goal of the demonstration project is to remove major barriers and disincentives to work for youth, aged 14-25, who receive, or who are likely to receive SSI, SSDI or CDB in order to maximize their economic self-sufficiency and career advancement. DVR is a primary partner in the implementation of Colorado Youth WINS at both the state and the community level.

As part of DVR's service delivery to clients, many individuals attend community colleges and universities. DVR Offices work closely with the many offices dedicated to support of students with disabilities at each institution. In addition, at the state level DVR has a representative who is a member of the Consortium of Support Programs for Students with Disabilities. This membership allows for ongoing communication between the community colleges, universities and DVR in areas related to accommodation issues and other related topics. This assists DVR customers in the completion of their areas of study and enables them to move more

successfully into their chosen employment outcome. This also supports the ongoing renewal of the memorandums of understanding between DVR and the six college boards within this state which detail the collaborative provision of services to students with disabilities who are in an institution of higher education and who are also recipients of services through DVR.

DVR staff has also worked with Access Colorado, an employer program associated with the Community College and Occupational Education System. This program has set up specialized employment training, which meets specific employer needs, for clients in this region. This resulted in a number of trainees obtaining career-path employment.

Community Centered Boards

Community Centered Boards (CCB) serving persons with developmental disabilities are important partners in DVR's effort to assure the availability of quality vocational rehabilitation services throughout the state. In nearly each area of the state, DVR counselors and supervisors meet frequently with Community Centered Board staff to coordinate services delivery. This is especially evident in DVR's delivery of supported employment services. For DVR customers who meet Community Centered Board eligibility for service delivery, the CCB is almost always the provider of extended ongoing support services to assure the success of the supported employment outcome. DVR staff, working together with CCB staff, assist and facilitate customer's expression of choice in service delivery options, employment outcomes, and providers of services through networks of "approved service agencies". Community Centered Boards: DVR staff attends board and committee meetings to facilitate an effective working relationship between our agencies. As identified in another section of this State Plan, DVR, the CCBs and the Division of Developmental Disabilities have entered into a pilot project to collaboratively increase and improve successful employment outcomes for consumers who are on CCB waiting lists for services.

The Corrections System

DVR acknowledges that many individuals who have been convicted of criminal acts are also individuals with disabilities. DVR staff coordinates services with probation offices, parole offices, as well as working directly with many of the youth and adult correctional institutions in the state. For individuals who meet DVR eligibility DVR works to coordinate services that compliment the release plans that are mutually developed by the individual with the disability and the correctional program they are attached to.

One of the region's Supervisors is a member of the Denver Juvenile Justice Network, along with other groups such as the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training (MOET), Department of Youth Corrections, and Summer Youth Employment. Counselors also work with referrals from the Department of Corrections/Adult Parole and Probation Officers. In addition, construction of a state prison in Sterling will cause both referrals and employment opportunities to increase, not only in the Sterling area, but also in surrounding communities.

Outreach to Employers

Outreach to employers is an important focus of service delivery in Colorado. The Division is a member of the Colorado Business Leadership Network. Counselors regularly participate with employers in training sessions and meetings, which enhances employer's awareness and understanding of the abilities

of clients we serve and the employee potential they offer. Additionally, DVR collaborates with the Colorado Coalition for Persons with Disabilities to operate Colorado's annual Job Fair for Persons with Disabilities. Also, DVR has three regional federal employment specialists throughout Colorado who are actively involved in linking federal job openings with DVR-involved job seekers. These specialists also work to develop new federal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Region II counselors have formed an in-house network of Job Developers. Counselors have also developed a training package on Disability Awareness for employers. Staff also participates on the Arapahoe County Job Developers Network. Coordination and collaboration in developing new employer linkages is resulting in more employment opportunities for individuals.

Other Collaboration

- DVR has entered into a partnership with the Denver Zoological Foundation to provide work adjustment and vocational skills training, in a zoological setting, to DVR young consumers. It is anticipated that braiding of funds will continue in the future to support ongoing activities and possibly expansion of this effort.
- DVR was a primary partner in the development of an application to participate in the National Governor's Association's (NGA) Policy Academy to Improve Outcomes for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities. Goals of this Academy include: improving interagency collaboration; strengthening accountability through shared data collection; establishing stronger connections with underserved populations; and increasing awareness of disability issues. In addition to DVR, core partners in this endeavor include: the NGA, The Governor's Office of Policy and Initiative, the Office of Workforce Development, UCHSC WIN Partners, the Department of Labor and Employment, Cerebral Palsy of Colorado, the Department of Education, the Community College System, the Department of Health and Environment, and Easter Seals of Colorado.
- In Ft. Collins, DVR staff meets regularly with the Veterans Administration to create employment opportunities for disabled veterans.
- Under a grant from the US Department of Agriculture to the Colorado State University and the Easter Seals of Colorado, services are made available to individuals with disabilities and families to help them remain in or enter the field of agriculture. Although available statewide, services are generally provided in rural settings throughout Colorado. DVR works closely with these agencies to identify individuals who would be eligible for DVR services and coordinate the provision of rehabilitation services necessary to maintain or obtain employment in the agricultural field.
- Under a contractual agreement with DVR the Western Slope Technical Assistance Center is a collaborative, inter-agency initiative designed to build capacity in Colorado through the provision of technical assistance, training, assessments, installation and follow up assistive technology devices and a fully operational loan bank of assistive technology devices with a value in excess of \$1,000,000. Through DVR collaborative efforts with Assistive Technology Partners, there has been an increase in the employability of people with disabilities served by DVR.
- A number of agencies and workgroups and regional staff have developed grant proposals, and implemented new grants that have expanded services to persons with

disabilities. These include the United Cerebral Palsy Association, which has two Projects with Industry Grants, the Colorado DeafBlind Network, the Deafness-developmental Disability Workgroup, Shalom, Platte River Industries, and the Brain Injury association of Colorado.

- DVR contracts with ten Independent Living centers through the Colorado Independent Living Core Services (CILCS) program to provide services such as independent living skills training, peer counseling (including cross-disability peer counseling), individual and systems advocacy, transportation, and housing. Each center also provides information and referral services to all individuals with disabilities who request this type of assistance or service.
- DVR also partners with the following agencies: National Federation for the Blind, Cerebral Palsy of Colorado, Craig Hospital, the Brain Injury Foundation, Denver Diaconal, Catholic Charities, Mi Casa, the Women's Bean Project, Bayaud Industries, Goodwill Industries, Aspen Diversified and other NISH contractors, hospital indigent programs, and substance abuse treatment centers.

All counselors and local supervisors have increased interactions with all vendors of services due to the Division's new Provider Agreement requirement. Working with vendors to identify their credentials and types of services available, will give clients more information to make better-informed choices about the services and vendors they choose to work with.

ATTACHMENT 4.9 (c)(2)

Coordination with Education Officials

FY 2007

Coordination with Education Officials

Since 1985, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has participated with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), as well as with local school districts and Boards of Cooperative Education, in supporting a comprehensive transition planning and service delivery process for youth with disabilities. To this end, DVR has organized a Youth Unit within Field Services Administration. This Unit is responsible for assuring the quality provision of vocational rehabilitation to Colorado's youth with disabilities. As a result, the following outcomes have been realized in Colorado:

- Youth with disabilities are successfully integrating into their communities as adults, in living, working and learning situations.
- Increased collaboration is occurring among community agencies in the provision of comprehensive transition services, as a result of interagency procedures that have been put into place to support transition
- Interagency teams of providers, often operating as a local youth council, are developing processes to mitigate ineffective local rules, procedures, guidelines, and practices that have traditionally obstructed the delivery of effective and coordinated transition planning and services

Recently, the state-level agreement between the DVR and CDE has been updated and rewritten. This agreement promotes flexible and collaborative planning and service delivery among DVR, local education agencies and local school districts, and other state and community agencies for youth transitioning from school to work and/or post-school activities which will lead to employment. It promotes accessible, timely and uniform vocational rehabilitation services for all Colorado students who have a disability and require VR services. Additionally, it encourages education agencies to develop, implement and promote pre-vocational services and career exploration for students with disabilities prior to referral to DVR. Finally, it assures that VR services complement services provided by education agencies. The new agreement contains an enhancement to the previous agreement, which defines a collaborative process that can be used by DVR and local education agencies to provide assistive technology to students.

DVR will continue to monitor and assure implementation of the tenets of this agreement. The key tenets of this agreement have been developed into a desktop guide entitled, the "CDE/DVR Cooperative Services Handbook for Youth in Transition." Literally thousands of these handbooks have been distributed to youth, parents, educators, VR counselors and community-based agency providers over the past several years. DVR and CDE plan to regularly update and continually distribute these guides throughout the state.

DVR participated with CDE in the statewide Transition Outcomes Project. DVR participation was at the state and local levels. The Outcomes Project first involves data collection related to transition service delivery within local school districts. Data collection is followed by training and intervention to improve transition services. Following data collection and training intervention, follow-up data is collected to determine positive impact and improved services following training interventions. As requested by CDE, DVR will continue to be involved in this Project.

DVR participated with the Division of Youth Corrections, the Metro Lab School, and four Colorado Workforce regions to implement the federally funded YEARS demonstration Grant. YEARS was a three-phase series of transition and wrap-around services that assist students within the youth corrections system to transition from incarceration into their chosen community.

Additionally, Colorado participated with DYC and CDE in an interagency partnership to improve transition services for youth with disabilities who have been adjudicated into the DYC system. DVR committed technical assistance, training and rehabilitation counselor staff to this effort. This partnership will continue into the future, although it will be scaled back from the more expansive effort that occurred in the recent past.

DVR participated with CDE, the University of Colorado Health Science Center's WIN Partners (WIN), CP of Colorado, the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) and the CO Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) to improve the usage and accessibility of Colorado's Workforce Centers for people with disabilities, including youth with disabilities. This took place through a United States Department of Labor workforce incentive grant. This grant initially established consumer/disability program navigators and SSA benefits planners within Colorado. DVR is represented on OWD's Executive Directors "Project Train" Advisory Group for this grant. "Project Train (Training, Resources and Incentives Network)" is a state advisory group of over thirty disability-provider agencies which was established under the workforce incentive grant and which is sustained through the involvement of the original grant participants. DVR will continue to maintain an active role in promoting universal access for youth with disabilities within the workforce system, and will actively provide statewide technical assistance and training within this realm. DVR participates on Colorado's State Youth Council as an active and voting member. DVR is also represented on all of Colorado's local youth councils. Through these avenues, DVR continues to hold up the importance of improving services to youth with disabilities through the greater workforce development system.

During the past two years, DVR expanded the School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) to forty sites. These forty sites involve 132 of Colorado's 178 school districts. SWAP serves over 1800 youth annually, and is a collaborative initiative between DVR and local school districts, which is supported by CDE. The purpose of SWAP is to provide successful employment outcomes, increased community linkages, and new patterns of services for youth with disabilities who are eligible VR consumers. Colorado anticipates expansion of SWAP to forty-five sites and over 140 school districts within the next year.

During Fall of 2003, DVR collaborated with CDE, OWD, CDLE, the Colorado Community College System (CCC) and the Colorado Department of Health to apply for and receive our "State Alignment Grant for Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities through the use of Intermediaries" The goals of this grant are to: improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities through the use of intermediaries; conduct resource mapping to assess the state's youth service delivery infrastructure in light of five evidence-based operating principles; and develop, implement and evaluate a cross-agency, multi-year state plan to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities through the blending and braiding of state, federal and community resources and local intermediary organizations. DVR has committed staff to this project, and will continue to be involved through the duration of the five-year grant and beyond.

DVR collaborates with CDE and Colorado's Business Leadership Network to support the implementation of Colorado's High School High Tech (HS/HT) federal grant, which was awarded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy. HS/HT is a community-based partnership of students, parents, educators, rehabilitation professionals, and businesses. The mission of Colorado's HS/HT program is to implement an enrichment program designed to expose high school students with disabilities to a variety of career opportunities, ready them for post-secondary education, and encourage them to achieve long term success. DVR will continue to support the efforts and activities of HSHT.

DVR has partnered, and will continue to partner, with local school districts and the Denver Zoological Foundation to provide horticultural and zoological training and work experiences to students with disabilities. DVR anticipates continuation of this collaboration, which was presented at the recent international zoological horticultural conference as a national model.

DVR participates as an active member of the Colorado/Wyoming Consortium of Disability Service Providers. This Consortium boasts membership from all Colorado and most Wyoming institutions of higher education as well as from CDE. This group has worked to develop disability documentation and accommodation guidelines that support an informed transition by youth with disabilities and their families, from the secondary into the post-secondary setting. Additionally, this group holds professional development workshops on a regular basis. A recent workshop, the topic of which was Assistive Technology, was coordinated and hosted by DVR. DVR will continue to be actively involved with this group.

DVR is participating with CDE, OWD and UCHSC/WIN Partners to implement Colorado's SSA Demonstration Project, "Colorado Youth WINS." Colorado Youth WINS (Work Incentive Network of Supports) is a five-year Youth Transition Process Demonstration (YTPD) funded by Social Security Administration starting September 30, 2003. The overarching goal of the demonstration project is to remove major barriers and disincentives to work for youth, aged 14-25, who receive, or who are likely to receive SSI, SSDI or CDB in order to maximize their economic self-sufficiency and career advancement. This partnership is anticipated to continue into future years.

Colorado DVR also participates on the Colorado Transition Coalition for Youth with Special Health Care Needs. The purpose of this Healthy & Ready to Work Initiative is to support youth with special health care needs (YSHCN) in receiving the services necessary to make transitions to all aspects of adult life, including adult health care, work, and independence. DVR plans to continue involvement with this Coalition. Additionally, DVR has a cooperative arrangement with Shriners Intermountain Hospital located in Salt Lake City, Utah, to coordinate and streamline the statewide process of referral to DVR for youth who are receiving services through the Shriners Hospital system.

In January of 2004, DVR partnered with CDE to update and reprint the "Cooperative Assessment Guidelines for School Practitioners." This document is disseminated widely to school practitioners in all Colorado high schools and middle schools, and to all DVR counselors. It is intended to promote the exchange and utilization of existing and new information between school practitioners and DVR providers. DVR plans to continue to disseminate this widely throughout the state, and to update the publication as needed based on changes in law, regulation and policy.

DVR and CDE collaborate to host statewide, regional and local trainings of community transition providers, including DVR, Education and SWAP. In September of 2004, DVR hosted a statewide transition workshop that was widely attended by DVR counselors and supervisors, special education directors and transition coordinators, and SWAP providers. A primary goal of the training was to enhance coordination of services between DVR and education-based transition efforts.

In addition to collaborating with CDE to host training activities, DVR and CDE present jointly throughout the state at conferences, training events and workshops. For example, CDE and DVR presented a session on collaborative transition planning at Colorado's Colorado

Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired conference which was held in of 2004. Additionally, DVR plans to present at Colorado's Adult Basic Education and Literacy and English as a Second Language statewide resource conference in the summer of 2005. Also, CDE and DVR Transition Specialists present information on transition and related changes and updates at DVR's regularly scheduled Field Services Managers Seminars and New Counselor trainings.

DVR and CDE plan to continue activities which support coordination between the two disciplines and which are designed to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in the school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services through DVR.

In addition to state-level hosted events, DVR counselors frequently outreach to students through various means. For example, they attend job and resource fairs, back-to-school nights, and parent-teacher conference nights. They present information about DVR at residential treatment centers, residential child-care facilities and at teacher in-service events. DVR plans to continue these types of outreach, education and consultation activities with our school partners.

DVR continues to be actively involved in Colorado's Disability Mentoring Day. Disability Mentoring Day promotes career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration.

DVR recently became involved in Colorado's Systems of Care Collaborative. This collaborative is a multi-agency endeavor, supported by the Office of the Governor. Its vision is that of a Colorado in which all children, youth, and families are able to access comprehensive, integrated and cost effective supports and services across sectors and within communities. One of the many important principles of the SOC effort is that children with emotional disturbances should be ensured smooth transitions through all major changes in their lives. Ongoing involvement in this initiative, and the role that DVR could play, will continue to be explored.

DVR has been involved since 2003 on the National Transition Leadership Summit team. The 2005 Summit will be held in June. The goal of this event is to convene state-level teams of policymakers to examine the progress made in the implementation of the strategic transition action plans developed at the 2003 Summit, and to further build state/territory capacity to improve high school experiences that lead to successful post-school outcomes for all youth.

ATTACHMENT 4.9 (c)(3)

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

FY 2007

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

Private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers have been and continue to be a long-standing resource used by the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to obtain necessary services for its consumers. Cooperative relationships between DVR and providers of vocational rehabilitation services are formalized through a written Provider Agreement. The Provider Agreement process is designed to assure adherence to three procurement requirements: that all qualified vendors have the opportunity to compete for business with DVR if they choose, that all vendors will be treated equitably and will be paid for their services in accordance with a standard method of rate setting procedures, and that there will always be a written contract in place when annual expenditures to any vendor reach \$25,000, as required by State Law, while assuring continuity of service provision to consumers. This effort has resulted in a consistent structure for establishing working relationships with service providers throughout the state and at the same time helps assure equitable payment across providers for the same types of services at the least possible cost.

Our provider agreement system is market-based, meaning that services are purchased based on competitive market rates instead of provider costs. The procedures require a vendor to complete the DVR Provider Agreement form that serves to register them as potential provider of specific services. Subsequent services purchased by DVR are limited to those identified on the agreement for which the vendor is registered. Execution of the Provider Agreement obligates vendors to meet certain qualifications related to standards that have been developed by DVR for the provision of specific services. Vendors also agree to abide by the established payment procedures and rates for each service DVR might purchase. Registration as a DVR vendor does not obligate vendors to provide services to DVR consumers nor does it obligate DVR to purchase services from any given vendor.

Initial approval of the Provider Agreement, once signed by the vendor, is done at the local DVR field office prior to approval by the Department of Human Services and the State Controller. This method encourages the DVR field office and the service provider to establish a strong understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities in the provision of services to consumers. It also puts the responsibility on the DVR field office supervisor to review the agreement for consistency between services offered and appropriate compliance with standards and credentials prior to their approval. Specific services identified on the Individual Plan for Employment are authorized by DVR counselors.

DVR believes that these procedures help ensure that adequate contracting procedures are used; purchases of services and goods maximize the efficient and effective use of public funds; services and goods will only be purchased from qualified providers; all vendors who wish to provide services to DVR consumers have the opportunity to do so and are subject to a consistent set of terms and conditions; and most importantly, DVR's consumers will have a wide range of options to choose from when selecting service providers.

In the past, DVR utilized establishment grant contracts for the establishment, development, or improvement of public or other non-profit community rehabilitation programs. Although a majority of individuals with disabilities served through the establishment grant contracts were not DVR consumers at the beginning of the contracts, many became DVR consumers over the three-year period of the establishment grant contracts. However, a change in federal regulations that limited the group of individuals served under establishment grant contracts to individuals who were either DVR applicants or DVR-eligible individuals (and a corresponding

DVR policy that required community rehabilitation programs to provide a list of DVR consumers with their billing form to be paid for services provided) resulted in a significant decrease in the interest level for establishment grants, as community rehabilitation did not wish to develop new services or new patterns of services that would only benefit DVR consumers and not their non-DVR consumers as well. As a result, applications responding to the Establishment Grant Contracts RFP from community rehabilitation programs significantly decreased. It became exceedingly difficult to attract a broad variety of community rehabilitation programs to apply for establishment grant contracts, especially in the rural areas of the state. Therefore, DVR decided not to continue the establishment grant contracts effective state fiscal year 2002.

ATTACHMENT 4.9 (c)(4)

Evidence of Collaboration Regarding
Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

FY 2007

Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Office of Workforce Development, the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), Mental Health Service Organizations, Division for Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Division of Mental Health (DMH) and employers have an extensive history of collaborative and cooperative efforts to provide supported employment opportunities in Colorado for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 further emphasizes the need for state agencies and other entities to develop innovative cooperative agreements as a strategy to leverage State/Federal dollars and encourage inter-agency cooperation. Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes that expansion of supported employment to all individuals needing supports to maintain competitive, integrated employment cannot be accomplished without such collaborative efforts.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) maintains formal statewide cooperative agreements with Division for Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and Division of Mental Health (DMH). These agreements identify plans for the provision of supported employment services for individuals with the most significant developmental disabilities, including mental illness. Both agreements provide for collaboration in the provision of intensive supported employment services, and stipulate, at a minimum, referral processes, specific services to be provided, provisions for training and technical assistance, responsibilities of each agency, standards of performance, and methods to evaluate performance. Each agreement is reviewed annually and amended when appropriate.

Division for Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Department of Human Services

The cooperative agreement between DVR and DDD is established for the purpose of clarifying the relative roles and responsibilities of both agencies in the provision of supported employment services to individuals with the most significant developmental disabilities. This agreement requires collaborative planning and coordination of services by the DDD community services agency and DVR to avoid duplication of services and, thereby, maximize available resources. As a result of this collaboration, much has been achieved in making community-based, integrated employment available for persons with developmental disabilities.

Under this agreement, DVR is responsible for the provision of intensive supported employment services, including, but not limited to, job coach training. However, due to the expertise and proven history of DDD in training individuals with the most significant developmental disabilities, the local DDD community service provider is normally used by the rehabilitation counselor to provide such training and other intensive supported employment services. The collaborative agreement identifies administrative and fiscal requirements governing payment for supported employment services. The DDD community service provider must be registered with DVR under a Provider Agreement to be able to provide supported employment services to DVR consumers. Services are thus reimbursed in accordance with DVR's fee schedule and service providers must meet the standards and credentials as required for the provision of specified supported employment services. Systems have been designed to encourage local level development of supported employment strategies between all DVR field offices and DDS supported employment service providers registered under a Provider Agreement. DVR assesses the effectiveness of this arrangement in terms of numbers of persons served and numbers of successful rehabilitation closures in relation to funds expended under the agreement. During SFY 2007, DVR will use Title I and Title VI B funds to purchase intensive supported employment services for at least 1,500 individuals with developmental disabilities at an approximate amount of \$436,000.00. DVR will also use approximately \$20,000.00 of Title I training funds to provide joint training activities for both DVR counselors and staff of DDD staff and supported

employment service providers to assure that both understand and implement best practices in the provision of supported employment services. It is believed that training efforts involving staff from both entities creates an opportunity to build collaborative efforts at the local level, give opportunities for staff from various parts of the state to share ideas and resources, and lead towards improved outcomes for persons served.

Division of Mental Health, Department of Human Services

Division of Mental Health (DMH) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) have maintained a formal cooperative agreement to provide vocational services to individuals with the most significant mental health disabilities. This agreement represents a collaborative effort to increase access to quality vocational services and to ensure the availability of supported employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness. The agreement stipulates collaborative planning and coordination of services by the local mental health service organizations and rehabilitation offices to eliminate duplication of services and maximize available resources. It also contains provisions for purchase of intensive supported employment services, including transitional employment services, from DMH. Such services are only purchased from vendors approved by both DMH and DVR, such as mental health centers, clinics, and other agencies or community-based programs. However, the rehabilitation counselor and consumer are responsible for determining the appropriate services and developing the supported employment Individualized Plan for Employment. As with the DDS cooperative agreement, service providers must be registered with DVR under a Provider Agreement to provide supported employment services under the DVR/MHS cooperative agreement. Under this agreement, Title I funds will be used to purchase supported employment services for a minimum of 250 individuals at an approximate cost of \$907,674.00 during SFY 05.

In addition to improved service delivery for each eligible individual, there has been a substantial increase in cooperation between local mental health centers and local rehabilitation offices. Improvements have been realized in interagency planning, training, information sharing, and resolving mutual programmatic and procedural concerns. There has also been a substantial increase in cooperation at the State level between DVR and DMH. Pursuant to this goal, an operations committee was formed in 2005 to facilitate interaction between rehabilitation offices and mental health centers and to monitor and evaluate performance under the agreement. The committee is composed of staff from both agencies as well as the Colorado Association of Clinics and Community Mental Health Centers, who are knowledgeable in budget and fiscal issues, program evaluation and quality assurance, policy, field operations, supported employment, and contracts. Ongoing meetings have been conducted to identify issues of mutual concern and to jointly explore and evaluate for future policy development as a means of collaborative problem resolution. This has resulted in a strengthening of communication and a greater understanding of missions, values, policies, rules and regulations, funding structure, and service delivery models of both State systems. In SFY 2007, DVR and DMH will continue to utilize this structure to enhance the effectiveness of collaborative provision of supported employment services to individuals with most significant disabilities due to mental illness.

Collaboration in the provision of supported employment services is an ongoing process, and numerous other efforts are in the planning and development stages. Through the use of satellite technology DVR is able to offer training on state of the art supported employment technology. These trainings are made available to DVR counselors and anyone else interested in supported employment on a statewide basis. Especially encouraging is the ability to offer such training to rural areas. Beginning in FFY 2004, DVR began a relationship with the University of Colorado's Health

Sciences Center to expand the availability of resources for assistive technology. This relationship will continue into FFY 2006. DVR will also continue to work closely with the Association for Persons in Supported Employment. This entity is very involved in education and public policy concerning supported employment and has a component to market to employers. The Center for Technical Assistance and Training (CTAT) provides technical assistance to local DVR offices and various DDD service providers on a statewide basis in the area of supported employment. Through a RSA grant CTAT has developed a Self-Directed Supported Employment program that focuses on consumer choice and interest. Collaboration between DVR and CTAT has led to successful consumer driven job search efforts and positive employment outcomes for DVR consumers.

The greatest challenge facing the supported employment program is to solidify adequate funding for the ongoing extended support services necessary to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities in maintaining community-based employment. In Colorado, collaboration among relevant State agencies, private nonprofit organizations and other community resources for the provision of extended ongoing support services takes many forms, ranging from informally established local cooperative working relationships between direct providers and consumers of supported employment services to formally negotiated statewide agreements among State agencies. Informal working agreements are developed to coordinate activities, such as transition from intensive supported employment services to extended services, the types of extended services to be provided, training of qualified individuals to provide extended support, job development for extended transitional employment, and referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) for post-employment services. The primary entities involved in these types of collaborative efforts are local rehabilitation offices, local school districts, Work Force Centers, independent living centers, local community rehabilitation programs, mental health centers, developmental disabilities service providers and other available service providers, including advocates and family members. In some locations, local consortiums have been formed, and some of these groups have received financial support from the local, State and/or Federal level. However, funding for extended support services is still insufficient in most local communities. Therefore, although supported employment depends on these informal collaborative efforts, more efforts are needed to enhance the availability of extended support services following termination of intensive supported employment services authorized under Titles I and VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (b)

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

FY 2007

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has a strong commitment to employing and retaining an adequate workforce of qualified vocational rehabilitation personnel, both professional and paraprofessional.

Collection and Analysis of Data. DVR currently has access to two existing data systems that identify the number of persons employed by DVR by personnel category. The primary one is maintained by the Department of Human Services' (DHS) Personnel Office. This is the database that maintains payroll information on employees, including their dates of hire, official job classifications, and home addresses. An additional database is maintained internally within DVR. It contains information on offices to which staff are assigned, functional job titles, and caseload information. The Human Resource Development Specialist uses these two databases as well as additional paper records to continuously gather and analyze information about the qualifications of the 214 full time positions held by DVR staff.

Currently, of the 214 full time positions within DVR, 110 of them are vocational rehabilitation counselors. The remaining 104 full time positions consist of administrative assistants, program assistants, office managers, district and regional supervisors, job placement specialists, rehabilitation teachers, orientation and mobility instructors, Business Enterprise staff and central office administrative staff.

The ratio of the number of vocational rehabilitation counselors to the number of consumers currently being served in applicant and active statuses (02 through 24, excluding 08) is approximately 1 vocational rehabilitation counselor for every 115 consumers. The ratio of vocational rehabilitation counselors to field support staff is approximately 3 to 1.

Projections of the number of individuals to be served, including those with significant disabilities, are based on projected increases for the general population and incidence rates for disabilities, using Colorado census data and State demographics. These projections, in combination with DVR attrition and retirement rates, are used to predict personnel needs for the next five years.

The attrition rate of DVR staff now averages about 7%, or approximately 15 staff per year. DVR projects that approximately 40 staff will leave during the next five years, of which 25 will be vocational rehabilitation counselors, 10 will be support staff and 5 will be supervisory and administrative staff. DVR believes that the administrative and supervisory positions will likely be filled from the pool of DVR counselors and other qualified existing staff. Thus, DVR anticipates the need to recruit approximately 25 vocational rehabilitation counselors and 10 support staff over the next five years in order to maintain its current level of services. These projections are based on current available information related to staff tenure and the state of Colorado retirement system.

The Colorado Legislature is currently considering measures which would return funding and additional Full Time Equivalent positions to the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation over the next state fiscal year. DVR's Organizational and Staff Development unit will continue to monitor this situation and address any additional recruitment issues raised by this potential action.

Current Status of Qualified Personnel. Of the 103 individuals currently in filled rehabilitation counselor positions within DVR, 98 of them are either Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC) or are qualified to sit for the CRC exam. 5 counselors do not yet fully meet the qualifications.

Of these 5, 2 are currently enrolled in graduate programs that will result in qualification to take the CRC exam within the next year. The remaining three individuals have recently been hired using the rehabilitation counseling intern classification and will be completing CSPD education plans within the next 5 years.

Coordination with Institutions of Higher Education. Colorado currently has only one educational program that specifically prepares vocational rehabilitation professionals. The University of Northern Colorado (UNC), which is located in Greeley, operates Master's level programs that prepare vocational rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation counselors with an emphasis in vocational evaluation, and orientation and mobility instructors. Graduates of the rehabilitation counseling programs possess the credentials necessary for certification in rehabilitation counseling (CRC). In addition, those completing the program with an emphasis in vocational evaluation also have the credentials necessary for certification in vocational evaluation (CVE). Orientation and mobility instructors graduate with the credentials necessary for certification through the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP). Faculty at UNC indicates that approximately eighteen individuals are currently enrolled in either the rehabilitation counseling program or the program that offers this dual emphasis.

The Division also coordinates with Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. Adams State caters to many of Colorado's rural areas and offers a master's program in community counseling from which several current staff have graduated. This program comes close to meeting all of the requirements for CRC eligibility. Individuals graduating from the program qualify for employment at DVR as a Rehabilitation Intern and need only to demonstrate a period of "acceptable employment experience" to be fully CRC eligible. Furthermore, Adams State College is located in the San Luis Valley, an area of the state with a high representation of individuals of Hispanic background, which helps increase the availability of individuals with minority backgrounds. Finally, Adams State continues to express interest in obtaining the CORE credential and developing and offering a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling.

In addition, DVR maintains an ongoing relationship with several other CORE accredited Rehabilitation Counseling programs including Utah State University, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, University of Kentucky and San Diego State University. All of these programs offer distance education programs are especially convenient for staff who work in areas of the State that are beyond commuting distance from the UNC program in Greeley, as well as those whose disabilities limit their mobility.

DVR's plan for recruiting qualified personnel, including qualified individuals from minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities, includes collaboration with all of the relevant educational programs mentioned above as well as several additional graduate programs with programs in vocational rehabilitation. DVR also recruits using the Oklahoma Clearinghouse website to post counselor openings. The state of Colorado continues to approve a waiver to DVR to enable the hiring of qualified counselors from outside of the state. This is extremely beneficial in recruiting efforts.

DVR believes that the private sector is another good resource for recruiting experienced, competent staff. Through its relationship with the Colorado Rehabilitation Association and the Colorado Rehabilitation Counseling Association, as well as the professional associations for other disciplines, DVR maintains a network for recruiting vocational rehabilitation counselors who have experience in the private sector.

Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce is an expectation for supervisors and is reflected in their performance plans. This has proven to be an effective tool in balancing the diversity of staff to represent all consumers. DVR is also in a position to offer all accommodations necessary to recruit and retain qualified staff with disabilities who may need accommodations to successfully compete for and do their job when hired.

Personnel Standards. Colorado does not have State-approved or recognized certification, licensing or registration requirements for many of the personnel classifications used by DVR, specifically rehabilitation counselors. In collaboration with Personnel, DVR has established its qualifications to be consistent with the highest national standard, the CRC, for vocational rehabilitation counselors and interns.

One of the levels at which counselors can be recruited is the Rehabilitation Intern level. This requires a Master's degree but allows a total of six years after employment for a candidate with a Master's degree in a counseling related field to complete the necessary coursework or accrue the necessary employment experience to be eligible to take the CRC. When necessary, recruiting at this level can bring in individuals from diverse backgrounds, allowing them to upgrade their qualifications while working under closer supervision. This option is especially useful in outlying areas of the state such as Alamosa and Sterling.

The qualifications are as follows:

REHABILITATION COUNSELOR I:

Requirements:

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or possession of a current Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) credential that was issued by the Commission for Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) or be eligible to apply for the CRC credential.

REHABILITATION COUNSELOR INTERN:

Requirements:

1. Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's degree in one of the following: Counseling, Rehabilitation Teaching, Education, Orientation and Mobility, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology, Behavioral Science or Human Services.

For the Intern classification, individuals are required to complete required coursework to meet the minimum qualifications for a Rehabilitation Counselor within 5 years after State certification as a condition of continued employment.

DVR implemented a CSPD tuition assistance policy in March of 2000 for those individuals who need additional training in order to meet the established qualifications. The policy requires individuals who do not currently meet the standard to develop and implement individual education plans. These plans have been phased in over several years, in order to spread out the costs and minimize the loss of productivity. DVR provides full tuition assistance as well as purchasing of required books for those needing to take additional coursework. The Human Resource Development Specialist works with individuals and their supervisors to ensure that training plans are in place and implemented appropriately in order to meet CSPD requirements.

In-Service Training funds are the primary source for any financial assistance that is provided to employees needing to upgrade their qualifications.

Every effort possible is made to recruit fully qualified staff, in the event someone is hired at the above-mentioned intern level, a specific plan for education and oversight is developed and implemented. It is anticipated that the Intern level will be used only when, due to special skills requirements (e.g., American Sign Language or Spanish) or geographic area, it is not feasible to recruit current CRC eligible level staff.

Other professional staff, such as job developers, are recruited as vocational rehabilitation counselors with special areas of emphasis, so they must meet the same requirements, with specific qualifications relevant to their assignment. This is a requirement of Colorado's state personnel system. For vocational rehabilitation counselors who will be serving large numbers of consumers who are deaf, there is a separate screening to determine their skills in American Sign Language communications. Orientation and mobility instructors and rehabilitation teachers must be eligible for certification in their discipline by the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP).

Communication with Diverse Populations. Approximately 20.6% of the individuals who apply for DVR services are Hispanic, 1% are Native American, and 1.2% are Asian American. Of these minority populations, it is estimated that more than 75% are able to speak and comprehend English. At the present time, at least 50% of DVR's field offices have one or more staff members who speak fluent Spanish, and all offices in the areas most heavily populated with Hispanics have at least one staff member who is also Hispanic. Other staff members have completed intensive Spanish-language training programs, with the goal of achieving a functional level of fluency. In addition, all offices have access to translation resources.

All communities with a significantly large population of individuals who are deaf are assigned at least one staff member who is proficient in American Sign Language. In the past when none of the applicants for the position possessed sign language skills, the individual who was hired was sent to the intensive sign language training program for vocational rehabilitation counselors for the deaf out of state. This training was supplemented with classroom instruction in sign language. There are approximately seven community-based organizations throughout Colorado that provide interpreting services as well as numerous private vendors, and offices without staff members who can interpret have local agreements with these organizations and individuals to provide interpreting services. Approximately 20 students are currently enrolled in the Interpreter Preparation Program at Front Range Community College, and this is expected to sufficiently address future interpreter needs. Every DVR office in the State has a TDD for communication with individuals who are deaf, and a telephone relay service is available through Colorado's local telephone provider.

The capacity to provide materials in Braille is available through equipment located in the Administrative Office and at the Denver Metro Office. Additional needs are addressed through the Boulder Public Library and private transcribers. This has been adequately meeting the current level of need. Many consumers, at this time, prefer materials on computer disk, and this is accommodated routinely. Materials are also routinely made available in large print.

Staff Development. Each year, DVR receives a grant from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) which is dedicated to providing in-service training for DVR staff. As part of the application process, an assessment of training needs is conducted, utilizing information from a variety of sources, including needs identified by staff as well as feedback from the State

Rehabilitation Council, the State plan hearings, the consumer satisfaction data, results of State-wide studies and analyses, Federal and State audits, and Federally-mandated priorities. This needs assessment is used to design the training plan which will best fit the most common needs of different categories of staff, including, as appropriate, training on the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Social Security work incentive programs, informed choice and other provisions of the 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, and culturally diverse populations. In addition to the RSA grant, DVR allocates additional necessary funds to ensure that all training needs are met. When supervisors identify skill deficits of individual staff members, appropriate training in the community may be arranged for and sponsored through in-service training. In-service training funds are also used to send staff to workshops, seminars, conferences, and formal training programs, including relevant graduate work, as well as for participation in training provided via distance education models.

Staff members who aspire to supervisory or administrative roles are encouraged and supported to take advantage of the Department of Personnel Supervisory Certificate Program and the Department of Human Services Supervisory Training and Review (STAR) program. The Department's Staff Development unit also continues to conduct two leadership programs to prepare individuals for leadership and administrative positions. DVR's succession planning further indicates that there will be an ongoing need for vocational rehabilitation counseling staff who are eligible for the CRC and DVR will continue recruitment efforts accordingly.

DVR does seek to take advantage of all relevant training opportunities for its staff. Through the Department of Human Services DVR staff will continue to be able to obtain quality training on diversity, equity and cultural competency. Leadership training is one of the top priorities for the Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program, and DVR will take full advantage of the training that they produce.

DVR has been and will continue to incorporate the principles of informed choice into all aspects of new training curricula including policy and procedural training as well as assistive technology training provided to DVR counselors. Such training efforts will include a focus on helping consumers develop skills necessary to analyze their own strengths, resources, capacities, concerns, priorities, abilities, interests, etc. so that they can come to their own informed conclusions related to the development of their rehabilitation program. DVR believes that these efforts will help counselors become better facilitators and help consumers develop better skills to become more independent and self directed, as they go through the rehabilitation process.

DVR is committed to maintaining a staff with state-of-the-art skills and knowledge of vocational rehabilitation theory and practice. A library of materials, in a variety of formats, including print, audio tape, video tape, and CD-ROM, is maintained as part of the In-Service Training program. Staff are encouraged to check out materials which will assist them in better serving individuals with disabilities. DVR regularly reviews the offerings available through a variety of sources, including the National Clearing House of Rehabilitation Training Materials, and orders those which will add value to its collection. The Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education program also maintains a library of materials, which are available for loan. DVR's future plans involve making optimal use of computerization, including the Internet and Intranet, to stay current on research findings and state-of-the-art advances and to disseminate materials to staff.

Coordination of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development and In-service Training. As part of its implementation of transitions services and DVR's School-to-Work Alliance Program (SWAP), DVR has a contract with the Colorado Department of Education to provide

training and technical assistance to DVR counselors and local education staff to enable them to work more effectively with students as they are transitioning from school to work. (See FY 2007 Attachment 4.9(c) for more information concerning training efforts in conjunction with that provided under IDEA and the SWAP program.) DVR counselors serving SWAP youth and the school district employees with whom they partner are also being provided copies of the new counselor training modules developed by the Region VIII RCEP. In-Service Training funds are used to provide continuing education for staff, with a special priority for rehabilitation technology needs and communications skills.

State Rehabilitation Council. DVR maintains a close working relationship with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and feedback from that group regarding training issues is solicited and incorporated where appropriate.

ATTACHMENT 4.12

Assessment; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

FY 2007

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (a)

Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals
with Disabilities and the Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation
Programs

FY 2007

Results of the Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities

In an ongoing effort to assess the extent and nature of services and programs necessary to meet the vocational rehabilitation needs of Colorado's residents with significant disabilities, the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) conducts an extensive ongoing needs assessment, seeking input from a variety of sources and employing both informal and formal methods of data collection.

Regularly throughout the year, DVR receives feedback from the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council, and through face-to-face interactions with individuals and entities in the community with whom DVR has developed collaborative working relationships, such as the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. DVR has found that these interactions have always yielded valuable information that it uses to develop and implement new programs and/or make adjustments to existing programs and services.

In addition, DVR receives feedback directly from consumers, partners, and providers through public hearings conducted in various areas of Colorado each year. At least one member of the SRC and two DVR representatives (one from the state office and one from a local field office) jointly facilitate each public hearing. The purpose of these hearings is to solicit feedback from consumers regarding the services they have received from DVR and suggestions for improving vocational rehabilitation services in the future.

To supplement the feedback collected through these mechanisms, DVR and the State Rehabilitation Council conducted a formal needs assessment study during the summer and fall of 2004. In preparation for this study, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation made recommendations to the SRC regarding the process and data collection tools to be used to conduct the formal study, and the following process resulted: 1,645 paper needs assessment surveys were sent to agencies and organizations in Colorado representing community rehabilitation programs, mental health, education, advocacy organizations, independent living centers, health and medical facilities, substance abuse providers, county human services agencies, and job developers in all areas of the state. A similar survey was sent to all DVR employees who interact with individuals with disabilities in our vocational rehabilitation offices on a day-to-day basis, and was also made available to consumers who entered these offices during a three-week period in August. The purpose of these surveys was to assess the need for the various vocational rehabilitation services provided through DVR, and the extent to which DVR's service delivery system has met those needs, with an emphasis on the following:

- Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services
- Individuals with disabilities who are minorities
- Individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program
- Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce system

Of the 1,645 surveys distributed to DVR's partners and providers, 410 were returned for analysis. Provider respondents represented the needs of individuals with visual, developmental, hearing, orthopedic, mental and emotional, learning, and TBI impairments. While most providers served individuals on the Front Range, responses were received from providers statewide.

Sixty-five DVR employees from field offices across the state completed a similar survey, as did 144 consumers. Consumers who responded reported the following disabilities:

Orthopedic/physical	60
Mental/emotional	48
Learning	23
Visual	19
Neurological or TBI	15
Hearing	14
Developmental	7
Other	17

After the survey results were tabulated, DVR and the SRC discussed the key findings described below and agreed upon the goals identified in attachment 4.12(c)(1). These goals have been active for the past two years.

Results of Colorado's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and DVR's Response to the Needs

All of the strategies employed to conduct the comprehensive needs assessment provided beneficial sources of information and data concerning the vocational rehabilitation needs of Colorado's residents with disabilities, particularly those with significant and most significant disabilities. The information received through the formal mechanisms served to validate and confirm the informal feedback that was gathered throughout the year.

The needs of individuals with disabilities can be categorized into 7 key areas: job finding and job placement services; training; transportation; Medical assessments, diagnostic, and restoration services; information and referral services; services to the deaf community; and bureaucracy of the DVR process.

The comprehensive assessment summarized above was designed to provide input to the goals and strategies outlined in the fiscal year 2006 State Plan. Therefore, the DVR responses below reflect our responses at the time the 2006 State Plan was developed. A new comprehensive statewide needs assessment will be conducted during the fall of 2007, with a summary and DVR responses to be included in the 2009 state plan.

1. Job finding and job placement services: The need for more effective job finding and job placement services was voiced universally and through all mechanisms employed to solicit feedback. It emerged as one of the highest needs in 2004, particularly by providers and DVR counselors when asked to rate and/or describe the services that are needed the most to help individuals with the most significant disabilities obtain, maintain, or regain employment. The survey results clearly identify the need for individuals to be provided with more intensive job searches that result in successful placements.

2006 Response: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation agrees that more effective job finding and job placement services are needed in order to achieve a higher number of successful employment outcomes. Responding to a 36% cut in general fund dollars over the past three years, DVR had to eliminate its internal job development and marketing unit, which provided these services internally, and was successful. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find external job placement providers who deliver high quality services, especially in the rural areas of Colorado. Providers who have traditionally placed individuals more successfully tend to have long waiting lists, and some providers are selective about the types of disabilities they will serve. Improving the quality of job placements is a goal for DVR in fiscal year 2006. A number of strategies have been identified for achieving this goal, which can be found in attachment 4.12(c)(1).

2007 Response: Job finding and job placement continues to be an area of focus for DVR, as it directly relates to our ability to achieve our third goal under Priority One, as outlined in attachment 4.12(c)(1) – "Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals." Much has been done already regarding job finding and job placement services. As noted in attachment 4.12(e), DVR was able to raise its job placement bonus from \$200 to \$400 in FY 2006, with an additional \$200 paid in placements where exceptional wages were offered to the job seeker. As noted on page 4 of attachment 4.12(d)(1), DVR is currently in the process of reviving its job development program,

which will allow us to provide these critical services internally rather than relying exclusively on vendors to provide them.

2. Training: The need for more, and more effective, training and support (i.e., adjustment training, job coaching, on-the-job training, assistive technology, and formal schooling) prior to placement in a paid employment setting was recognized as one of the highest needs in 2004, particularly for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

2006 Response: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation considers job coaching, adjustment training, and on-the-job training to offer one of the best opportunities for individuals with most significant disabilities to secure and maintain gainful employment in integrated work settings within the community. These services are provided to enable individuals, particularly those with most significant disabilities, to obtain career outcomes, to learn job skills, and to maximize their hour and wage employment opportunities in the competitive workforce. DVR will continue to provide these services as needed for all eligible individuals, including those with a supported employment plan. DVR believes that the growing need for these types of training services cannot be met by vocational rehabilitation agencies alone, but requires the collaborative efforts of a variety of service providers. DVR continues to build networks and productive working relationships with providers of these services to ensure that it has the capacity to provide them when necessary. It is the policy of DVR to plan and provide for formal schooling for a consumer when it is necessary for that individual to achieve his or her chosen employment outcome. DVR plans to review its policies and procedures to ensure that it has not created any artificial roadblocks to providing these services. DVR has also identified a number of strategies that will be employed in FY 2006 aimed at increasing the amount of assistive technology training available to consumers. These strategies can be found in attachment 4.12(d)(1).

2007 Response: DVR has nearly completed a complete revision to its policy and procedure manual. DVR is certain that its revised policies and procedures do not create any artificial roadblocks to providing training services when necessary and appropriate. As noted in attachment 4.12(e), DVR raised fees for community-based work adjustment training, job coaching, community-based situational assessment services, and job seeking skills training. In addition, assistive technology training was provided to counselors to increase their ability to steer consumers in the right direction with regard to their assistive technology training needs. The ability of DVR to appropriately identify and provide these training services to consumers, when necessary and appropriate, will have a direct impact on the following goals, as outlined in attachment 4.12(c)(1): "Improve the effectiveness of the service delivery process for all individuals", "Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals", and "Increase the availability of consumer assistive technology training to allow them to more effectively participate in their rehabilitation program."

3. Transportation: Individuals living in rural areas who do not have transportation were identified as a group that has traditionally been underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program. The need for more public transportation options and alternatives to public transportation for employment purposes were, once again, identified as a need. This need was magnified for individuals needing transportation during the early morning and late night hours, and for individuals residing outside of public transportation boundaries. Access-a-ride, a transportation program for individuals unable to access the

city busses due to the nature of their disabilities, is available only in the larger metropolitan areas of Colorado, and was cited as an unreliable alternative.

2006 Response: DVR provides transportation services to individuals who are applicants or eligible for vocational rehabilitation services to the extent that they are available. The unavailability and unreliability of accessible transportation clearly hinders the vocational endeavors of individuals with most significant disabilities. DVR actively advocates for the development and/or expansion of such services and plans to represent the interests of individuals with disabilities in various transportation initiatives during FY 2006. One such initiative in which DVR will be involved is the "Getting There" project, funded through Rose Community Foundation. Its purpose is to identify all of the transportation options and methods by which transportation is funded/paid for in the state. Ultimately, it will give us a body of data that identifies the major gaps in the state as far as public and accessible transportation are concerned.

2007 Response: Transportation is clearly a need that can't be solved by DVR alone. However, DVR does believe that it can have some influence in this area. As noted in attachment 4.12(d)(1), Goal 1 ("Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for all individuals"), Strategy #5 ("Partner with other agencies and organizations to expand transportation options in areas where they are currently limited) directly addresses this need. DVR is currently partnering in two transportation initiatives that begin to address the transportation gap.

4. Medical assessments, diagnostic, and restoration services: A need that has surfaced in recent years, and again in 2004, involves access to timely, convenient, and affordable medical assessments and services geared toward the treatment of chronic or ongoing physical and mental impairments. This need is particularly strong for individuals with the most significant mental disabilities, a group identified by the survey as one that has traditionally been underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program

2006 Response: The lack of affordable health care to address medical maintenance needs such as ongoing disability-related medications and therapy – even for persons receiving Medicare and Medicaid – is not unique to Colorado. It is one of the most intractable problems that this agency and its consumers struggle with. Increasingly, eligible individuals look to DVR as their medical insurance provider, and DVR is being requested to provide for routine and ongoing medical needs that go considerably beyond what the Rehabilitation Act, as amended under Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, defines as physical or mental restoration services. In addition, when DVR believes that it is appropriate to provide for ongoing health care needs during the vocational rehabilitation program, consumers are frequently reluctant to have their service records closed because their employment does not provide health insurance. There are a number of resources located locally and throughout the U.S. that provide low-cost prescriptions for a variety of medications, including psychotropic drugs. These resources have enabled counselors, in many cases, to assist consumers to obtain the medication they need at affordable prices. DVR plans to conduct a more thorough evaluation of the ongoing needs for individuals with mental impairments in FY 2006.

In addition, DVR recognizes that there are only a limited number of providers willing to provide evaluations, assessments, and medical services under its current provider agreement fee schedule, particularly outside of the Front Range area. Thus, it is often

difficult for DVR to provide these services even when they are necessary and appropriate for eligibility determination and/or for the eligible individual to attain his chosen employment outcome. DVR has determined that it is feasible to raise fees paid for medical services effective July 1, 2005. We are currently in the process of identifying the specific services and details associated with the fee increases. In addition, DVR is exploring the possibility of entering into a collaborative agreement with other agencies that utilize these services and, due to their volume, receive them at a discounted cost.

2007 Response: As noted in attachment 4.12(e), DVR was able to raise the fees paid for medical services by 19% during FY 2006. In addition, DVR converted its fund 7 agreement to an RFP process, whereby mental health centers receive an agreed-upon amount on an annual basis, as opposed to drawing down funds on a per-case basis. This has resulted in more stabilized budgets and improved outcomes for the mental health centers with whom DVR works. This continues to be an area of focus for DVR, particularly with regard to mental health, as evidenced by Goal #2 ("Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf and for individuals who have mental health needs"). Strategy #1 (Strengthen partnerships with mental health providers in Colorado) describes our efforts to work together with others in the community to reduce this service gap.

5. Information and referral services: Both consumers and providers have acknowledged a need for consumers to be informed in a more standard and independent manner about all of the services that are available to them through DVR.

2006 Response: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation strives to provide as much information as possible to consumers regarding the services available to them throughout the vocational rehabilitation process. Each field office displays a menu of rehabilitation services available to consumers. During the IPE planning process, counselors are expected to provide the consumer with a description of the services available to help them make informed choices about their employment plan. Within each description, however, there are a wide variety of services that are available based on an individual's needs. Describing each of these services in great detail may lead to the assumption that anyone eligible for DVR's services can access any of the services that DVR provides, which is not necessarily the case. The services that are available depend greatly on the individual's needs, as determined through a comprehensive assessment with the individual. In addition to the information exchange that takes place on an individual basis between the consumer and counselor, DVR has a number of brochures available to the public that describe the services available. These brochures are currently undergoing revisions to make them more descriptive. Once they have been revised, they will be made available in each DVR office, as well as in organizations that typically refer clients to DVR. In addition, DVR is currently in the process of developing a new web page that will describe the services offered to consumers.

2007 Response: This need is directly related to DVR's second priority (Maintain sufficient organizational capacity to operate an effective vocational rehabilitation program), Goal 1 (Increase the visibility and public understanding of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation). As noted in attachment 4.12(d)(1), DVR has a number of strategies focused on better information and referral services, including education of the public and community partners through open houses, a new and improved website, and through the development of professional outreach materials that can be distributed to

community partnering programs. In addition, DVR is currently in the process of hiring an individual whose role will be specifically focused on education and outreach. This position will work closely with referral sources, employers, and other audiences to ensure that they have the most current and accurate information about the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the services it can provide.

6. Services to the deaf community: Individuals who are deaf have been identified in a number of forums as being underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program. The deaf community perceives an inadequate level of service and an ineffective service delivery infrastructure. A need has been identified for VR staff to be better trained to understand the culture of deafness and to provide services to individuals who are deaf in a more effective manner. In addition, assistive technology for individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired is inadequate, and the interpreters used by DVR are under-qualified to provide high-quality interpreting services.

2006 Response: Improving the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf has been set as a goal for DVR for FY 2006. Currently, DVR has at least one staff member who is proficient in American Sign Language assigned to each community in Colorado with a significantly large population of individuals who are deaf. DVR also utilizes the services of seven community-based organizations throughout Colorado who provide interpreting services. In addition, DVR has approximately 30 students enrolled in the Interpreter Preparation Program at Front Range Community College, and this is expected to sufficiently address future interpreter needs. Every DVR office in the State has a TDD for communication with individuals who are deaf, and a telephone relay service is available through Colorado's local telephone provider. In FY 2006, DVR plans to conduct a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the services it provides to individuals who are deaf and hearing impaired. Based on the results of the evaluation, DVR will determine what modifications or process changes are necessary to increase the quality of services provided to individuals from this population. This strategy is described in more detail in attachment 4.12(c)(1).

2007 Response: DVR continues to work diligently to address the service gaps for the deaf community, as noted by goal #2 (Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf and for individuals who have mental health needs). As noted in attachment 4.12(d)(1), the SRC is partnering with DVR to focus their satisfaction assessment specifically on consumers who are deaf, and DVR continues to utilize assistive technology that is available to help meet the service needs of this community.

7. Bureaucracy: There is a need to reduce the level of bureaucracy and red tape associated with receiving services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, including reducing the amount of work required for consumers to complete DVR's paperwork, obtain medical reports, cooperate with billing requirements and locate and secure a job on their own.

2006 Response: DVR acknowledges that the paperwork currently required of applicants and eligible individuals can be overwhelming, especially if they complete them without the assistance of a vocational rehabilitation staff member. It is an expectation that all counselors assist consumers in completing the paperwork in whatever ways are

necessary. This expectation will be reinforced with counselors and incorporated into future training initiatives.

2007 Response: As noted in attachment 4.12(e), DVR underwent a complete revision of its documentation process, which has increased the amount of time that counselors can spend with consumers working toward the goals identified on their IPEs. In addition, in FY 2004, the process that vendors are required to follow in order to do business with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation was significantly reduced, requiring much less paperwork. This simplified process reduced the amount of time required for a vendor to become approved, thereby increasing DVR's ability to efficiently identify a vendor to provide a necessary service in a consumer's IPE.

In the past two years since the last comprehensive assessment was completed, DVR has identified through both the public hearings conducted in the fall of 2004 and 2005, and through interviews with key informants, two additional populations that have traditionally been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program. These are: 2) homeless individuals with disabilities and 2) individuals with developmental disabilities, including the need for more effective supported employment services. DVR has developed new partnerships that further address the specific needs of both of these groups. These partnerships are described as on page 3 of attachment 4.12(d)(1), as DVR's strategies to address Priority #1: "Increase the number and quality of employment outcomes", Goal #1: "Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for all individuals."

Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation uses private and non-profit community rehabilitation programs to provide a large majority of the goods and/or services that DVR consumers receive as part of their individualized plans for employment. Prior to July 1, 2003, DVR routinely used establishment grants aimed at establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs to address the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities. Due to funding shortfalls and changes in the federal regulations, these grants were discontinued on July 1, 2003. Since this time, DVR has found it to be a more effective process for individual DVR counselors to establish and maintain relationships with community rehabilitation programs in their local geographic areas. In fact, in addition to the cooperative agreements that DVR maintains on a statewide level, local field staff have developed a number of less formal partnerships with community rehabilitation programs, as described in sections 4.9(c). These partnerships have helped DVR play an indirect role in developing and/or improving these programs, without necessarily providing funding for them.

Currently, DVR is working in close collaboration with the Statewide Independent Living Council to improve the core services that they provide, particularly to those individuals who are blind. DVR currently maintains separate contracts with six of the ten Independent Living Centers and the Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB), through the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) Program, to provide independent living services to individuals who are 55 or older whose significant visual impairments make competitive employment extremely difficult to attain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (b)

Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

FY 2007

Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

DVR anticipates that it will provide vocational rehabilitation services approximately 5% more individuals than during 2005, as it begins to re-open services to individuals with least significant disabilities. Approximately 7,000 individuals will be provided diagnostic services pursuant to determining eligibility. Of the 16,639 eligible individuals that DVR anticipates it will provide vocational rehabilitation services to, it is estimated that 15,474 individuals will receive services provided with funds under Title I part B of the Act and that 1,165 individuals will receive services provided with funds under Title VI part B of the Act. The number of eligible individuals served by priority category and the estimated service costs to be achieved between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006 appear on the following chart.

ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS AND SERVICE COSTS BY PRIORITY CATEGORY* July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007

	Eligible Individuals	Service Costs
Individuals with most significant disabilities	8,320	\$11,045,529
Individuals with significant disabilities	4,992	\$10,382,797
Individuals with least significant disabilities	3,328	\$662,732
TOTALS	16,639	\$22,091,058

*This does not include an additional \$1,332,897 that DVR expects to spend on assessment services provided pursuant to eligibility.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (c)(1)

State's Goals and Priorities

FY 2007

State's Goals and Priorities

Based on the results of the comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities that were described in section 4.12(a) of this state plan, as well as DVR's internal needs, DVR collaborated with the State Rehabilitation Council in March 2005 to establish long term priorities and goals for the vocational rehabilitation program. This process resulted in the development of two core priorities and goals to support each. The goals outlined below took effect on July 1, 2005 and will be carried over as goals for fiscal year 2007 as well.

Priority #1: Increase the number and quality of employment outcomes.

Goals	Measures*
<p>Goal #1: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for all individuals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of successful post-IPE closures. • Percentage of all post-IPE closures that were closed successfully.
<p>Goal #2: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf and for individuals who have mental health needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of all deaf or hard-of-hearing post-IPE closures that were closed successfully. • Percentage of all mental health post-IPE closures that were closed successfully.
<p>Goal #3: Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of successful closures that are in competitive employment. • Average hourly wage for successful competitive closures. • Average difference between weekly wages earned at application and at closure. • Percentage of successful closures whose primary support is "self".
<p>Goal #4: Increase the availability of consumer assistive technology training to allow them to more effectively participate in their rehabilitation program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of consumers receiving assistive technology training services. • Number of consumers receiving computer access training services. • Number of vendors DVR has available for assistive technology training.

Priority #2: Maintain sufficient organizational capacity to operate an effective vocational rehabilitation program.

Goals	Measures*
Goal #1: Increase the visibility and public understanding of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people who apply for DVR services. • Number of applicants determined eligible for DVR services. • DVR's application acceptance rate. • Number of community educational initiatives conducted by DVR or in which DVR staff participates to increase visibility and public awareness of programs and services.
Goal #2: Increase the amount of financial support received from the state of Colorado for the DVR program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of state general fund dollars allocated to DVR
Goal #3: Improve DVR's ability to maintain a full and competent staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of filled to vacant full time FTE's. • Average amount of time it takes to fill a vacant DVR position. • Percentage of all staff departures that are due to reasons other than retirement. • Average supervisory rating on the CDHS Supervisory Feedback Survey • Number of training opportunities made available to staff. • Number of training attendances by DVR staff.

* DVR's goal is to increase performance over the previous year on those measures for which prior year data is available.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (c)(2)(a)

Order of Selection

FY 2007

Order of Selection

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) implemented an Order of Selection on March 1, 1993 due to the lack of sufficient funds to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible persons. This action resulted from increased costs for vocational rehabilitation services, increased demand for services, an increased number of applicants with significant disabilities, and an inability of Colorado DVR to match all available Federal funds. However, DVR was able to serve all eligible individuals from SFY 1994 – SFY 2003. During the State budgetary process for SFY 2004, the DVR general fund state tax dollar budget was reduced by 25% which, when matched with federal funds, resulted in a reduction of approximately \$5,000,000 to DVR's total budget. As a result, DVR has been serving only the highest two priority categories under the Order of Selection since May 21, 2003.

During the State budgetary process for SFY 2007, the Joint Budget Committee recommended that DVR's general fund state tax dollar budget be increased to \$1.8 million and that 24.2 FTE be restored. In addition, new funding and additional FTE were recommended for two new projects and for improvements to the BEP program. If the Governor approves these recommendations, DVR expects to be able to begin serving individuals in all priority categories at some point in the coming year. However, because these dollars are not guaranteed until our governor signs the long bill in late June, and because DVR will need a period of time to develop the human resources and processes that will allow us to start serving all categories, DVR will continue its Order of Selection for FY 2007.

In accordance with Section 101(a)(5)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, DVR has designated that individuals with disabilities will receive vocational rehabilitation services in the following order of priority:

FIRST : Eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities

SECOND: Eligible individuals with significant disabilities

THIRD: Eligible individuals with least significant disabilities

All eligible individuals with disabilities whose priority category is closed after initiation of services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) shall continue to receive services. All services, including post-employment services, shall be available to eligible individuals receiving services under an order of selection. All applicants, including those receiving trial work experiences, shall receive any and all services necessary to determine eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services and order of selection priority classification without regard to the availability of funds or the implementation of the order of selection. Such services shall be provided on a timely basis in accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and the regulations found at 34 CFR Part 361.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has developed the following criteria to identify an individual with the most significant disability:

- The individual must have an impairment or impairments which, alone or in combination, are severe,
- The individual must be seriously limited from achieving an employment outcome due to serious functional loss in **three or more** of the functional capacities identified in Section

7(15)(A) of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112) as amended through 1998 (Public Law 102-569),

- The individual must need at least two **core vocational rehabilitation services*** to address the functional losses imposed by the significant impairment(s) in order to attain an employment outcome, and
- It will take a minimum of **five (5) months** to complete the services.

* **Core vocational rehabilitation services** includes all vocational rehabilitation services other than supportive services (maintenance, transportation, services to family members, and personal assistance services); services secondary to core vocational rehabilitation services, such as training materials and supplies when training is being provided as a core vocational rehabilitation service; or, generalized counseling, guidance, and placement which are provided during the vocational rehabilitation process in connection with the provision of vocational rehabilitation services but are not identified as a needed vocational rehabilitation service on the IPE.

**SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS AND TIME FRAMES FOR ACHIEVING THEM
July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007**

	Eligibility Decisions	New Plans	26 Closures	Active Eligible Records
Individuals with most significant disabilities	2,720	1,824	829	8,320
Individuals with significant disabilities	1,632	1,095	933	4,992
Individuals with least significant disabilities	1,088	730	311	3,328
TOTALS	5,440	3,649	2,073	16,639

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (c)(3)

Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

FY 2007

Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) will continue to earmark available grant funds obtained under Title VI, Part B (Supported Employment Services), towards the administration of the supported employment program and the purchase of services in accordance with the 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. No more than 5% of supported employment grant funds will be used for administrative activities, including, but not limited to, data collection and analyses, training, and consultation costs. At least 95% of grant funds under Title VI, Part B will be used to purchase supported employment services under Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE) for individuals with the most significant disabilities who have been determined eligible for supported employment. (The types of services to be purchased remain the same as those identified in Attachment 7.3 of the State plan.)

During FY 2005, approximately 721 individuals with the most significant disabilities received supported employment services paid for, in part, with Title VI, Part B funds. In addition, 695 received supported employment services under Title I (Vocational Rehabilitation Services), through direct case service authorization and under cooperative agreements. DVR's administrative priority is to assure the provision of supported employment services to all who need it, and it does not guide counselors to be concerned about whether they are funded through Title I or Title VI-B. This means that frequently individuals are served using a combination of the two funding sources.

To successfully meet the supported employment needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, DVR has continued the collaborative efforts and working relationships between local DVR offices and mental health centers, and between local DVR offices and agencies serving consumers with developmental disabilities. DVR counselors and vocational staff from the above agencies work together to identify individuals who would be appropriate referrals to DVR for supported employment services.

DVR continues to work actively within the realm of Education, including Colorado's School to Career and Transition activities, and within the realm of WIA, to assure that youth with the most significant disabilities are accessing career, transition and employment services, including supported employment services, along with all Colorado youth. DVR has worked to infuse best practices within these areas, so that the needs of youth with the most significant disabilities are considered and met. Colorado DVR and Department of Education state-level staff work and travel as a team throughout the state, to respond to requests and to provide training, technical assistance and facilitation to local community agencies, such as schools and adult organizations, as these entities struggle to provide collaborative transition services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

Since FY 2004, DVR has participated on the State Youth Council and on all eighteen local Youth Councils, to help assure that the needs of youth with disabilities, including those youth with the most significant disabilities, are considered in the planning and implementation of community youth programs and activities. The mission of Colorado's State Youth Council is "to create a pathway of economic success for Colorado's youth through the influence of policy and practice." Through DVR's involvement at the state and local levels, Colorado Youth Councils are doing a better job of identifying barriers and gaps to linking youth with the most significant disabilities to services, and of creating linkages and opportunities for these youth that lead to successful employment, including supported employment.

Typically, DVR uses 100% of its Title VI-B funds for the direct authorization of supported employment services. Title I funds are also used for supported employment services provided

under cooperative agreements as well as for individual supported employment programs. As identified above, DVR's policy is to assure the provision of supported employment services to all who need it and DVR places no value on using Title VI-B funds as opposed to Title I. Thus, it is impossible for DVR to separate its programmatic supported employment plans and goals into separate components for each funding source. Rather, DVR develops programming strategies for its entire supported employment program, which includes the use of Title VI-B and Title I funds.

The Division's programmatic activities for supported employment services and programs funded under both Titles I and VI-B are intended to increase the number of persons receiving supported employment services and to improve employment outcomes for these individuals. The Division believes that the most effective and efficient strategy to accomplish this is by expanding and strengthening its collaborative linkages with relevant State agencies and/or private not-for-profit agencies for the provision of supported employment and extended support services. Most of the following activities to be conducted during 2007 reflect a continuation and refinement of activities performed over the last several years. Although several of the planned activities reflect efforts to expand the capacity for extended services in the community, neither Title I or IV-B funds will be used to pay for extended ongoing support services.

Planned Activities

- DVR will be partnering with the Colorado Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Colorado Association of Providers of Supported Employment (APSE) to develop regional training sessions for staff from both agencies aimed at enhancing services and increasing employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- DVR will continue to support and actively work with the Center for Technical Assistance and Training to identify and provide technical assistance to vocational rehabilitation field staff and other service providers.
- DVR will continue to be represented on all Local Youth Councils to help develop strategies, including supported employment services, to meet the unmet needs of youth with the most significant disabilities.
- DVR is represented on each of Colorado's eighteen Workforce Investment Boards and is able, through this forum, to assure that the needs of persons with the most significant disabilities are considered and planned for as Colorado's local communities develop WIA programs, such as Workforce Centers, and policy to employ unemployed and underemployed Coloradoans. DVR will continue to be actively involved with WIA related activities and with the development and implementation of these activities statewide. Through membership on every Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council within the state, DVR will continue to provide technical assistance, training and resources in support of enhancing services to persons with the most significant disabilities, via the WIA system.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (d)

State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

FY 2007

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (d)(1)

To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals
and Priorities

FY 2007

To Address Needs in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities

As identified in section 4.12(c)(1), DVR has developed two core priorities and a number of goals that support each. Based on feedback received through the comprehensive assessment, public hearings, advisory councils, and other less formal venues regarding the needs of Colorado residents with disabilities, DVR has developed a number of strategies to address each goal. While some of these strategies are new for DVR, many are continuations and refinements of strategies initiated over the past five years.

Priority #1: Increase the number and quality of employment outcomes

Goal #1: *Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for all individuals.*

Strategy #1: Reduce the amount of time spent on documentation of the VR process. DVR will continue its efforts toward the development of its automated case management system, RISE. Once fully implemented, this effort will assist counselors in managing and completing necessary casework documentation more accurately and efficiently than in the past. RISE design teams will be working intensely during state fiscal year 2007 to complete design plans for the various modules, which will be rolled out in phases. The Resource Management module is scheduled for implementation beginning in September 2006, followed by Case Service Accounting in August 2007, and Case Management in November 2007. In addition to the development of RISE, DVR will be completing and disseminating a new policy manual on July 1, 2006. This policy manual will be presented in a new, user-friendly format and is expected to make it significantly easier for DVR staff to locate and interpret policies and procedures applicable to their work.

Strategy #2: Enforce the quality assurance feedback loop. In January 2005, a revised quality assurance process was implemented, which will continue to be utilized throughout FY 2007 and beyond. This new process places a great deal of effort and importance into ensuring that quality assurance findings and results are communicated in a timely manner and in appropriate levels of detail to counselors, supervisors, and decision makers in the Field Services unit of DVR. Following each quarterly quality assurance case review, state- and region-wide results are presented, and a facilitated discussion takes place to identify the policies, procedures, and any other factors that may be impacting the numbers, either positively or negatively. In addition, the review process incorporates a system of data collection that will allow for quality assurance questions to be correlated with vocational rehabilitation outcomes. This will help DVR to focus its improvement strategies around case management behaviors that truly make a difference to an individual's success.

Strategy #3: Examine the feasibility of structural modifications to the fee schedule. During FY 2006, DVR modified its fee schedule to allow for higher fees paid for critical services such as medical services, job development and job placement services, as well as some assessment services. DVR is currently in the process of examining the feasibility of additional fee increases, as well as restructuring the schedule to allow for more flexibility in paying specialists in rural Colorado.

Strategy #4: Improve the accessibility of DVR for all individuals. DVR is committed to the ongoing evaluation of the accessibility of services in the more remote areas of Colorado and

plans to open offices in several rural areas of Colorado during the last quarter of FY 2006 and during FY 2007. These areas include, Aurora, Rocky Ford, Ft. Morgan, Longmont, Summit County-Silverthorne, Edwards, Trinidad, Lone Tree and Arvada-Wheat Ridge. These offices will be staffed with 24 new positions, increasing DVR's ability to serve its consumers in a more effective and efficient manner. In addition, DVR will be creating an additional ten positions that will be used to help DVR lift its wait list and staff the innovation and expansion projects that are described in strategy #8, below.

During FY 2007, DVR will be securing the services of a contractor to develop a new and improved website for the agency. In addition to allowing for online application and email access to all offices, the improved website will be compliant with Section 508 standards, making it fully accessible to persons with disabilities. Web pages will also include a button that once selected will translate the page into Spanish, as well as a number of other languages. These features will appeal to a broader audience of Colorado citizens who are seeking information about DVR and its services.

Strategy #5: Partner with other agencies and organizations to expand transportation options in areas where they are currently limited. DVR is forming partnerships to create lasting transit options in rural and remote areas of the state. For example, in Montrose, DVR has offered to provide some local match for federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) dollars in the amount equal to the level of transportation our clients will use when new transportation options are established. Opportunities such as these will also exist elsewhere in the state and DVR will participate financially and non-financially where it will help meet the transportation needs of our clients. DVR is also participating in planning efforts to build better transportation coordination in the state. For example, DVR is participating on the Denver Region Mobility and Accessibility Coalition (DRMAC). In this forum, we can convey the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities so that they are considered when decisions about transit options are made.

Strategy #6: Enhance the utility of the DVR data provided to the field on a regular basis. DVR field supervisors receive regularly scheduled data reports from the administrative office. The purpose of these reports is to assist supervisors in managing their productivity and quality to meet their annual goals. During FY 2007, DVR plans to continue to work with field supervisors to examine their needs regarding data, and to ensure that mechanisms are built into the RISE system that will allow these needs to be met.

Strategy #7: Strengthen training efforts. The DVR Training Unit continues to be very effective at responding to staff needs for training. In addition to offering a wide variety of training sessions to staff during FY 2007, the unit is currently planning a statewide conference to be held during the fall of 2006. This conference will be made available to all staff and attended by the majority. This year, the conference will be held in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education, as well as School to Work Alliance Program/Transition staff.

Strategy #8: Outreach to rural areas with regard to teaching services for the blind. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation offers training programs to help people who are blind or visually impaired become independent at home, in the community and in employment. Depending on the individual's needs, training may be provided through the center-based Personal Adjustment Training Program or the field-based Rehabilitation Teaching/Orientation and Mobility Program, where instructional services are provided at the individual's home, on the job site, and/or in other community settings. Currently, these programs are based out of

Denver, oftentimes requiring travel on the part of the trainee. During FY 2006, DVR hired an Orientation and Mobility Instructor in Pueblo and will be hiring another Teacher/Orientation and Mobility Instructor in Colorado Springs.

Strategy 9: Innovation and Expansion. DVR will be bringing up two new innovation and expansion projects during state fiscal year 2007, and continuing the Independent Living Centers – Vocational Rehabilitation Program, which obtains qualifying vocational rehabilitation services from Centers for Independent Living (CILs). These services assist DVR consumers to overcome barriers in their lives that interfere with their ability to find and/or retain gainful employment. The services are individualized in collaboration with the DVR counselor to meet the needs of the DVR consumer in the local community. The two new projects are:

- **Plan to End Homelessness in Denver Initiative** – DVR received an additional Rehabilitation Counselor I position to be housed with the City and County of Denver, beginning July 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2008. This position will be dedicated to providing vocational rehabilitation services to City and County of Denver homeless clients to assist them in achieving self-sufficiency.
- **Developmental Disabilities Employment Services Pilot Project** – DVR has entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Division of Developmental Disabilities to house six Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors at six local Community Centered Boards. These counselors will focus on promoting successful community employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities who have been determined eligible and are recipients of services through the Community Centered Board system.

Goal #2: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf and for individuals who have mental health needs.

Strategy #1: Strengthen partnerships with mental health providers in Colorado. DVR believes that it must find cooperative ways to overcome the barriers associated with service effectiveness to individuals with mental health needs. DVR plans to continue building relationships with its partners inside and outside of the Department of Human Services during FY 2007 to keep the lines of communication open with regard to improving services for these individuals. DVR's new RFP process for engaging the services of mental health centers has proven to be effective and we anticipate being able to add at least two more centers during FY 2007.

The Mental Health Vocational Consortium has been meeting quarterly for the last 10 years or so, and DVR will continue to participate in this group and co-chair the meetings. Attendees include the Vocational Coordinators from public mental health center programs around the state, DVR counselors who work with them to pay for vocational services, representatives from the Division of Mental Health, and other representatives from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The purpose is to facilitate ongoing communication between DVR and the mental health centers and to build greater understanding between the two systems.

Strategy #2: Conduct a formal evaluation of the DVR services provided to individuals who are deaf, and make recommendations for improvement. During FY 2007, DVR plans to continue its formal evaluation of the services it provides to individuals who are deaf and hard-of-hearing. Amongst other things, this evaluation will study the quality of employment outcomes for deaf individuals versus non-deaf individuals, the length of time it takes to achieve these outcomes for each population, the sufficiency of the interpreting services available, and the

prevalence of counselors fluent in American Sign Language versus the need in various areas of the state. In addition, DVR is partnering with its State Rehabilitation Council to conduct focus groups that will solicit the views of individuals from these populations. Recommendations will be made for process changes that may lead to greater levels of effectiveness.

Strategy #3: Increase the availability of assistive technology for communication with individuals who are deaf. During FY 2006, DVR began using video phone technology as well as real-time captioning to enhance communication with individuals who are deaf. This technology is being used in offices where the necessary telecommunication requirements are available. DVR will continue to monitor these and other new technologies, and will make it available for use in its offices, when available and appropriate.

Strategy #4: Explore the use of Rehabilitation Technicians or Assistants. DVR will be working with personnel and human resources staff from the Colorado Department of Human Services to explore the possibility of adding the new classification of rehabilitation technician or assistant. It's envisioned that this position would be supportive to the rehabilitation counselor in activities such as searching job leads, gathering medical information, contacting consumers for purposes of caseload management, etc. Because of the rigorous educational requirements, DVR has struggled to find qualified rehabilitation counselors who are either bilingual, have American Sign Language skills or are otherwise skilled in working with certain specialty populations, such as those with mental illness. DVR hopes to use this potential job classification to better serve our diverse customers.

Strategy #5: Increase training efforts around service delivery for individuals with mental illness. DVR is in the process of developing a training curriculum for Rehabilitation Counselors and administrative staff that will focus on mental health issues. In addition to providing basic information for about mental illness, the training will cover topics such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, including desk aids and resources, personality disorders, and new treatment methods. The first session will be scheduled during the summer of 2006.

Strategy #6: Work with a vendor to develop a peer mentoring program. During FY 2005, a peer mentoring program was piloted in the Denver Metro vocational rehabilitation office. This program is intended to augment the services of counselors and provide some extra support and attention to clients with that need. The goal of the program is to connect customers of DVR who are successfully reaching (or have successfully reached) their own employment goals with customers who are new to the process or who are struggling to use the process. The mentoring program, in part, is an extended communication apparatus for persons who are having difficulty utilizing the DVR process as a tool. It is important that DVR help the consumer to understand the importance of his or her individual contribution to the process, and relay that his or her employment goals can be realized given commitment and diligence. The mentoring program is an excellent beginning toward achieving a consumer's ultimate success in entering the job market. Exposing customers to the first-hand example of other customers who are having success in achieving their objectives will be a huge incentive to strive harder. DVR intends to continue to build and refine this program during FY 2007.

Goal #3: Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals.

Strategy #1: Enhance the capacity to provide job placement services internally. Although some counselors provide job development and job placement services directly to some of the

individuals on their caseload, many do not have the time or resources to do so effectively. During the last quarter of FY 2006 and into FY 2007, DVR plans to cultivate the skills and infrastructure across the organization and not rely as heavily on external vendors for these services. DVR plans to hire a statewide Job Development Coordinator who will be housed in the Denver Metropolitan area, as well as seven additional Job Development Specialists (DVR currently has two), who will be housed regionally throughout the state of Colorado. These individuals will be responsible for working with employers on a regular basis and building a job development program that will help improve the quality of job placements statewide.

Strategy #2: Build stronger community connections. During FY 2006, DVR will continue to build stronger relationships and connections with local employers, as well as other agencies conducting job development and job placement, in order to expand on the resources we currently have available for these services. DVR plans to utilize the services of a professional publishing company during FY 2007 to develop a set of print and video-based materials to be used in DVR's educational efforts. DVR will use these materials, as well as continued face-to-face interactions, to strengthen the ability of staff in other agencies working with individuals with disabilities to discuss with employers and other audiences the important role of individuals with disabilities in the workforce.

Goal #4: Increase the availability of consumer assistive technology training to allow them to more effectively participate in their rehabilitation program.

Strategy #1: Strengthen our partnership with the Colorado Assistive Technology Partners and Independent Living Centers. During FY 2007, DVR will continue to expand the WestTAC assistive technology project running on the Western Slope into Colorado Springs, where it will be accessible to individuals in Southeast Colorado. This project will conduct AT assessments, as well as provide technical assistance to DVR Counselors in the area of assistive technology. In addition, DVR will continue to become more aware of, and involved with, the work being conducted by the Colorado Assistive Technology Partners. Specifically, DVR will outreach to this group for assistance in educating DVR staff about the current projects that are underway and identify ways that DVR can become involved.

Strategy #2: Provide training on assistive technology to counselors. DVR believes that for effective training to be provided to consumers, counselors need to better understand the available assistive technology. DVR's internal AT training unit will continue to make consultation and training available to all of DVR's employees. In addition, staff members are encouraged to participate in assistive technology trainings and conferences that come up throughout the year.

Priority #2: Maintain sufficient organizational capacity to operate an effective vocational rehabilitation program.

Goal #1: Increase the visibility and public understanding of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Strategy #1: Educate legislators and other community members about DVR's benefit to Colorado. During FY 2005, DVR partnered with the State Rehabilitation Council to begin an ongoing process of extensive education for members of Colorado's general assembly and the public about the contributions to Colorado's economy and infrastructure. DVR developed an assortment of charts and graphs that visually display increases in the tax base and taxes paid, reduced reliance on public assistance, and other benefits in each area of the state. In addition, open houses were held at strategic locations across the state where educators and the public were invited to our DVR offices and learn more about the services that DVR provides. These strategies will continue to be employed throughout FY 2007, in an effort to develop greater levels of public understanding about the program. Continuous education about the vocational rehabilitation program will become especially critical this year after elections are held in November, as Colorado will elect a new Governor and there will be a large turnover in the General Assembly.

Strategy #2: Publish an annual report following each fiscal year. Prior to its budget shortfall, DVR published an annual report of its key accomplishments following each fiscal year. During the fall and winter of 2005, DVR revived the development of this process and distributed an annual report that summarized its key accomplishments for state fiscal year 2005. This annual report will be prepared each year as a strategy for increasing public understanding, and will be distributed strategically to individuals that DVR targets for education.

Strategy #3: Develop a new website with enhanced functionality and ensure it provides current and appropriate information. During FY 2007, DVR will be securing the services of an experienced web developer to update its website. The goal of this project, which is targeted for completion in early FY 2007, is to develop a user-friendly, accessible site for potential and current DVR consumers, employers, and providers that provides current, simple, and appropriate information. The new website will provide, amongst other things, information about DVR's application process, eligibility requirements, available services, office locations with email links to each one, DVR's forms, steps to employment, employment tools, and information about each of our specialty programs.

Strategy #4: Enhance the quality of DVR's outreach strategy and materials. During FY 2007, DVR plans to utilize the services of a professional marketing firm to develop a set of "print and video-based materials to be used in DVR's educational efforts. These materials will be "branded" to provide a consistent look and feel across the materials. DVR will use these materials, as well as continued face-to-face interactions, to educate a wide variety of individuals including potential consumers, employers, elected officials, and other state and local agencies working with individuals with disabilities.

Goal #2: Increase the amount of financial support received from the State of Colorado for the DVR program.

Strategy #1: Educate legislators and the public about DVR's benefit to Colorado. As mentioned above, DVR partnered with the State Rehabilitation Council during FY 2005 to begin an ongoing process of extensive education for members of Colorado's General Assembly and the public about the contributions to Colorado's economy and infrastructure. DVR developed an assortment of charts and graphs that visually display increases in the tax base and taxes paid, reduced reliance on public assistance, and other benefits in each area of the state. In addition, open houses were held at strategic locations across the state where educators and the public were invited to our DVR offices to learn more about the services that DVR provides. These

strategies will continue to be employed throughout FY 2007, in an effort to develop greater levels of public understanding about the program.

Strategy #2: Responsible use of new resources. During the State budgetary process for SFY 2007, the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) recommended that DVR's general fund state tax dollar budget be increased to \$1.8 million and that 24.2 FTE be restored. In addition, new funding and additional FTE were recommended for two new projects and for improvements to the BEP program. DVR will plan and carefully execute a strategy to ensure that these additional dollars are spent fully, accurately, effectively, and efficiently. DVR will report back to the JBC how the money was spent and the additional benefit that DVR was able to provide to the State of Colorado through the use of these dollars.

Strategy #2: Internal education about DVR. DVR feels that, in order for our education and outreach efforts to be effective outside of the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), it must make a concentrated effort to educate higher level managers and other groups within CDHS about the benefits of DVR. During FY 2007, DVR will be receiving a new Executive Director, who will need some general education about the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the important role it plays in our State. DVR will continue to identify forums where opportunities for education exist and can be utilized.

Goal #3: *Improve DVR's ability to maintain a full and competent staff.*

Strategy #1: Conduct exit interviews. During FY 2007, DVR's administrative office will continue to conduct regular exit interviews with staff members who resign for reasons other than retirement, in an effort to better understand the reasons that people leave. The results of these exit interviews will be used as a management tool to help identify retention strategies.

Strategy #2: Provide opportunities for advancement. DVR's current practice is to hire internally when filling the majority of supervisory roles that become vacant. There will be expanded opportunities during FY 2007 as DVR begins to fill vacancies in the counselor series, explores the possibilities of using rehabilitation technicians, and creates new specialty positions in its state office. During FY 2007, DVR will continue to encourage and support staff members who aspire to supervisory or administrative roles to take advantage of the supervisory and leadership training programs sponsored by the Department of Personnel and the Department of Human Services. Leadership training is also one of the top priorities for the Region VIII Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program, and DVR will take full advantage of the training that they produce. In addition, beginning in November 2005, the Organizational and Staff Development Unit began providing a series of leadership training to first and second level supervisors as well as to management staff at monthly meetings.

Strategy #3: Strengthen our partnership with the human resources unit within the Colorado Department of Human Services. During FY 2005, DVR began to develop a partnership with the human resources unit with the Colorado Department of Human Services. As a result, DVR was able to obtain waivers allowing us to hire individuals living outside the State of Colorado. DVR will maintain open lines of communication with the human resources unit to ensure that these waivers are renewed on an annual basis. In addition, DVR will continue to educate HR staff about the qualifications required by the federal government for rehabilitation counselors so that HR can implement selection tests and processes that result in

the hiring of individuals who meet these qualifications. DVR will also provide contractual resources, where necessary, to ensure that our additional positions are filled in a timely manner.

Strategy #4: Create a positive working environment where staff feel valued. During FY 2005, DVR's administration conducted a number of focus groups throughout the state. Staff were invited to attend and provide feedback about the current state of DVR and their ideas for improving the work environment. A number of suggestions were made and incorporated into a Field Services Action Plan. As a result of the completion of the action plan, DVR witnessed improved morale on the part of its staff. During FY 2006, DVR continued its efforts to elicit regular input and feedback from staff and to maintain a positive work environment, and will do so again in fiscal year 2007. As a result of these focus groups, DVR will be implementing a new Rewards and Incentives program during FY 2007 that will give supervisors and managers greater flexibility in their ability to reward their staff in meaningful ways.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (d)(2)

To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant
Disabilities Who are Minorities

FY 2007

To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities

The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is committed to assuring the availability and effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services for diverse ethnic groups. As evidenced by the following table, our outreach to ethnic communities has been effective. For all ethnic and racial minority populations, except Asian Americans, DVR's percentage of applicants and persons successfully rehabilitated equals or exceeds the minority group's representation in Colorado's general population.

Ethnic/Racial Distribution
Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Colorado's Population

Ethnic Group	DVR Applicants 2004	Successfully Rehabilitated 2004	Colorado Population
Caucasian	67.6%	72.5%	74.5%
Hispanic	19.2%	18.2%	17.1%
African American	8.7%	6.4%	3.7%
Native American	2.8%	1.4%	.7%
Asian	1.6%	1.6%	2.3%
	100%	100%	100%

Source: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation applications taken and persons successfully rehabilitated between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004 and, 2000 State census data.

Although the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is serving diverse ethnic groups in close proportion to their incidence in the general population, DVR continually strives to further identify and increase outreach to ethnic groups, including those with the most significant disabilities, and to improve the quality and effectiveness of service provision. However, rather than develop special programs and processes which focus exclusively on individuals from minority backgrounds who have most significant disabilities, DVR implements strategies to increase outreach and service effectiveness to all individuals within an ethnic group, regardless of significance of disability. DVR believes that this approach assures outreach to persons with most significant disabilities from minority groups without de-emphasizing outreach to all persons with disabilities from minority groups.

DVR continues to believe that one of the most effective strategies to assure adequate outreach and service provision to individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities from diverse ethnic groups, is to employ staff from ethnic groups and/or staff who can communicate with individuals in their native languages, when necessary. This is even more important for individuals with most significant disabilities whose vocational rehabilitation typically requires more intensive interactions with counselors. In order to assure that staffing is appropriate to meet special communication needs of individuals with disabilities, including those with most significant disabilities from ethnic backgrounds, staffing patterns and consumer populations are routinely reviewed to ensure that personnel who are bilingual and/or who are of ethnic backgrounds are available to communicate with consumers.

Recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel, including those from ethnic backgrounds, are on-going activities. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation recruits counselor interns from university programs where internships are a requirement for graduation. Selection of interns from diverse ethnic groups, when available, is a priority. Recruitment announcements for staff vacancies are shared with community agencies and organizations that provide services to ethnic groups as well as with the Rehabilitation Counseling Program and RRCEP at the University of Northern Colorado, and other institutions of higher education. Further efforts to solicit applications from individuals from ethnic backgrounds include job announcements that are posted on the Internet.

The largest ethnic minority group in Colorado consists of individuals who are Hispanic or Latino; in fact, this population now makes up over 19.2% of DVR's applicants annually. Therefore, it is critical for DVR to assure adequate service delivery staff members are available that can speak Spanish. At the present time, approximately 50% of the district offices have at least one staff member who speaks fluent Spanish. All offices have no- or low-cost translating resources readily available to assist with communication when necessary. In recent years DVR has upgraded the telephone system within field offices to include multiline capability. This technology enables staff members to connect up to two outside lines together permitting three-way calling. DVR is developing a list of offices with staff members who are English/Spanish bilingual so that offices lacking a staff member who speaks Spanish, but receives a telephone call from a monolingual Spanish speaking individual will be able to connect to an office with a bilingual staff member who will serve as an interpreter. This will eliminate the need for monolingual Spanish speaking individuals to have to call back or wait for a bilingual staff member to call them back.

From a statistical perspective DVR believes we have demonstrated that our current outreach efforts are adequately addressing the needs of ethnic and racial minority groups with the most significant disabilities. Despite this, DVR is committed to being attentive and active in identifying cooperative and collaborative relationships that will facilitate the awareness of DVR service delivery options to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (d)(3)

To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

FY 2007

To Overcome Identified Barriers Relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

Comparison of DVR's caseload data to Colorado's population characteristics as well as analysis within disability groups does not suggest that equitable access to the vocational rehabilitation services or the supported employment services programs is a problem in Colorado. However, it is an important issue and can always be improved upon. Pursuant to this, DVR has established the following specific goals and strategies concerning access to our programs.

Barrier #1

DVR would like to expand the availability and ease of access for consumers to information about the existence of the agency, its purpose, eligibility, services, and locations of DVR offices.

Strategy

1. During FY 2007, DVR will update its website. The goal of this project is to develop a user-friendly, accessible site for potential and current DVR consumers, employers, and providers, that provides current, simple, and appropriate information. The new website will provide, amongst other things, information about DVR's application process, eligibility requirements, services available, office locations with email links to each one, DVR's forms, steps to employment, employment tools, and information about each of our specialty programs. The improved website will be compliant with Section 508 standards, making it fully accessible to persons with disabilities. DVR will include the web-site address for DVR on printed brochures and other publications.
2. DVR will expand annual training regarding DVR to local school districts, BOCES, independent living centers, advocate organizations, other state and county agencies, and community service organizations. DVR will provide training to some of these entities. DVR maintains numerous desk aids for use by school personnel to increase their awareness of collaborative DVR services and to provide office contact information.
3. DVR will continue to take part in local community events where various service providers and public agencies provide information concerning their programs and services to the general public. DVR will use this forum to "get the word out" about the DVR program to individuals that may not necessarily be considering a public agency, as a means to obtain necessary services. DVR will continue to host Community Education Events to educate legislators and the public.
4. Individualized Performance Objectives on staff performance plans will continue to emphasize outreach efforts, particularly to those populations who are less likely to come to DVR on their own.
5. DVR will display posters in offices, which identify and describe DVR services.
6. DVR will update its listing with the 211 system.

Barrier #2

The availability of adequate and accessible public transportation especially in rural areas, and in the Denver-metropolitan area, continues to be a problem for those persons served by DVR related to their ability to get to local DVR offices, to get to service locations, and to travel to places of employment.

Strategy

1. In order to actively advocate for the needs of persons with disabilities related to transportation issues, staff of DVR will participate on the Alternative Transportation Committee. This committee provides input to the Regional Transportation District (RTD) related to Access-A-Ride services for persons with disabilities, in the Denver metropolitan area, as well as to companies that provide alternative transportation. Division staff will continue to provide input and education about the need for improved transportation options for DVR consumers.
2. An Orientation and Mobility Specialist for the blind will serve on the RTD Advisory Board. To address the needs of passengers who have disabilities, and help provide disability awareness training for drivers.
3. Counselors and supervisors will continue to make special efforts to identify employers, in rural areas who have developed specialized transportation services for their employees, and develop employment opportunities for DVR consumers with these employers.
4. DVR staff will help to raise public awareness of the need for adequate and accessible public transportation in rural areas for all citizens, including individuals with disabilities, to enable them to have wider options of where and when they can work. Rehabilitation Teachers for the Blind based in Denver will outreach to rural communities to work with consumers, and can provide consultation on travel accommodations and adaptive skills to enhance their ability to travel.

Barrier #3

Need to assure on a statewide basis, the availability and use of assistive technology services and devices, as appropriate, at each stage of the rehabilitation process.

Strategy

1. DVR is committed to expanding the availability of assistive technology services and resources for all individuals with disabilities in all areas of the state, regardless of the point during the vocational rehabilitation process at which they become needed. Please see Attachment 4.12 (d)(1) for DVR strategies related to the provision of assistive technology services.
2. The Adaptive Technology Specialist, based at the Denver Metro Office will travel to outlying DVR offices to provide consultation to counselors and staff regarding assistive technology services and devices.

3. DVR staff will continue to collaborate with community-based organizations to explore the development of local Assistive Technology Centers, which can provide assessment services and demonstrate devices and equipment.

ATTACHMENT 4.12 (e)

Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I
Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

FY 2007

Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation conducts an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the program in achieving its goals. This information is used as a benchmark to review progress made year to year as related to internal performance indicators developed by DVR. Management staff uses this information to identify areas needing improvement as well as positive achievements, and to develop agency strategies and build on best practices. These internal performance indicators are measured on a state fiscal year. Thus, at the time that this report is submitted, DVR has data for only 3 quarters of the current year (ending March 22, 2006).

Priority One: Increase the number and quality of employment outcomes.

Goal 1: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for all individuals.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Total number of successful post-IPE closures	1858	1914	1464
Percentage of all post-IPE closures that were closed successfully	65.79%	56.80%	61.36%

Three quarters of the way through the state fiscal year, DVR has achieved 1464 successful closures. If DVR continues to perform in the manner it has performed thus far this year, we will exceed our target of 1914 successful closures. The rehabilitation rate for Colorado this state fiscal year to date has also stayed well above the federally required level, with 61% of post-IPE closures being closed successfully. Some of the strategies DVR put into place during FY 2006 to help us achieve these levels of performance include:

- DVR reduced the time spent on documentation of the VR process with the implementation of new forms that were introduced on March 1, 2005. DVR ensured that these new forms were available to all counselors in easy-to-use electronic formats, and that all staff had solid understanding of the required information for the new forms. Quality assurance reviews throughout the year revealed that, although the process was new and required some adjustment for counselors, the new forms are doing a good job assisting counselors in providing succinct, efficient documentation for their service records.
- DVR made significant progress toward the development of the automated RISE system. Many small groups assigned to reviewing and validating requirements worked hard during the year to complete their work. The Resource Management module, which includes a vendor database, is currently in the design phase, with an anticipated completion date in April 2006. Implementation of this module is scheduled to begin September 2006, followed by Case Service Accounting in August 2007 and Case Management in November 2007.
- DVR's internal quality assurance team conducted 324 case reviews during August and November 2005. Both positive and constructive feedback from these reviews were provided to each counselor, as well as to members of the Field Services Management Team for continuous quality improvement discussions.
- DVR increased its accessibility across the state by opening three new offices – one in Greeley, one in Steamboat Springs, and one in Craig. In addition, DVR obtained and distributed a toll-free number for consumers to contact any of DVR's field offices.

- DVR raised or restructured its fee schedule in areas where it had become more difficult to attract high quality vendors. Specifically, medical fees were increased by 19%; fees paid for community-based work adjustment training and community-based situational assessment services were increased by 19%, with a new set-up fee of \$50/hour; a set-up fee was implemented for trial work experiences at \$50/hour; job coaching fees were increased by 19%; the hourly rate for job seeking skills training was capped at 15 hours in an effort to achieve outcomes more quickly; and the bonus paid for job placement was increased from \$200 to \$400, with an additional \$200 paid for exceptional wages.
- DVR's state office developed a PowerPoint presentation that explains, in terms that are easy to understand, the standards and indicators for which DVR is held accountable. This presentation was distributed at the end of the federal fiscal year and again mid-way through the federal fiscal year to all DVR staff, with updated information about how well DVR is performing against these indicators.
- During state fiscal year 2006, DVR staff participated in a variety of training and professional development activities that in some manner supported their work toward achieving DVR's mission. Training topics have included assistive technology (including Window Eyes), Asperger's, Dealing with Difficult Customers, American Sign Language, Spanish, Business Writing, Social Security and Leadership in Employment. In addition, DVR has offered internal trainings using Organizational and Staff Development staff and other internal agency experts. These trainings have included 2 sessions of week-long New Counselor Training and an in-depth training on Deaf-Blindness. DVR has also contracted and worked closely with trainers to customize a vigorous, hands-on training on Job Development and Placement for DVR counselors and SWAP staff that will be delivered in April 2006. Several in-depth training sessions on Self Employment have been developed and delivered by DVR's Human Resource Development Specialist.

Goal 2: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf and for individuals who have mental health needs.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Percentage of all deaf or hard-of-hearing post-IPE closures that were closed successfully	83%	83%	71%
Percentage of all mental health post-IPE closures that were closed successfully	64%	64%	62%

While this will continue to be an area of focus for DVR for during fiscal year 2007, we took the following steps during fiscal year 2006 to begin to enhance our effectiveness with these two populations:

- DVR continued to co-chair the Mental Health Vocational Consortium, whose purpose is to facilitate ongoing communication between DVR and the Division of Mental Health through quarterly meetings. As a result of these discussions, effective July 1, 2005, DVR converted its fund 7 agreement to an RFP process, whereby mental health centers who participate receive an agreed-upon amount on an annual basis, as opposed to drawing down funds on a per-case basis. This has resulted in the addition of two new centers working with us in the San Luis Valley, and has allowed services provided by Colorado West to be expanded into Glenwood Springs, Garfield County, and Pitkin

County. The mental health centers working with DVR prefer this new structure, as it allows them to have a stabilized budget throughout the year, and DVR expects to bring on more centers during FY 2007. An evaluation of this new structure is planned for May and June of 2006.

- DVR is in the process of developing a training session for Rehabilitation Counselors and administrative staff that will focus on mental health issues. In addition to providing basic information for staff who have limited exposure to mental illness, the training will cover topics such as Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, including desk aids and resources, personality disorders, and new treatment methods. The first session will be scheduled during the summer of 2006.
- DVR is currently working with the SRC to conduct a formal evaluation of the DVR services provided to individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. DVR is taking the lead in comparing the quality of employment outcomes for this population with the employment outcomes of the program as a whole. The SRC is taking the lead on conducting focus groups with individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to gain more perspective on the sufficiency of services to these populations.
- During fiscal year 2006, DVR began using two state-of-the art assistive technologies to help us be more effective in serving individuals who are deaf. Counselors who carry a deaf caseload now have the use of video phone technology at their work site. For counselors who can sign, they simply call their consumer's number using their Logitech camera attached to their computer and can carry on a conversation using Sign Language. In addition, real-time captioning is now used during meetings with individuals who are deaf.
- Fees paid for medical services, including mental health services, were increased by 19%.
- In an effort to attract more and higher quality interpreters for the deaf, DVR has modified its cancellation agreement. Previously, DVR would pay only 50% of the fee if services were canceled within 24 hours. This was increased to 100% of the fee if services were canceled within 48 hours.

Goal 3: Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Percentage of successful closures that are in competitive employment	92%	Increase over 2005	91%
Average hourly wage for successful competitive closures	\$9.87	Increase over 2005	\$10.63
Average difference between weekly wages earned at application and at closure for successful competitive closures	\$251/week	Increase over 2005	\$262/week

While DVR has made progress on this goal, it will continue to be a focus area in fiscal year 2007.

- During FY 2006, DVR increased the bonus levels paid for job placement from \$200 to \$400, with an additional \$200 paid for exceptional wages.
- DVR was awarded 24.25 additional FTEs from the legislature and plans to hire 8 individuals responsible for job development during the next state fiscal year; one Job

Development Coordinator in the state office, and seven additional job developers in local field offices across the state.

- DVR has planned a week long, hands-on, intensive training curriculum that focuses specifically on job development and job placement. This training will be repeated throughout the year to ensure that all counselors have the opportunity to participate.
- DVR has been strengthening connections with the Workforce Centers in Colorado through joint participation in meetings designed to enhance understanding of the services offered on each side. In addition, DVR plans to seek joint housing at Workforce Centers in rural parts of Colorado as it expands offices around the state.
- DVR will again be participating in the Job Fair for People with Disabilities in May 2005. For more than 20 years, the annual Job Fair for People with Disabilities has enabled local businesses to distinguish themselves as community leaders by taking advantage of the opportunity to make a difference. It creates opportunities and significantly strengthens relationships between the disabled community and each participating company. Past job fairs have attracted over 600 qualified job seekers and, on average, 50 employers, as well as various Denver area resource agencies. Fees are used to cover the cost of the barrier-free event, which includes promotional and educational materials in alternative formats.

Goal 4: Increase the availability of consumer training intended to increase their skill in using assistive technology that allows them to more effectively participate in their rehabilitation program.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Number of consumers receiving assistive technology training services through purchased services	174	Increase over 2005	172
Number of consumers receiving computer accessibility training services through DVR's internal training program	31	Increase over 2005	41
Number of vendors available to DVR for the provision of assistive technology training	168	Increase over 2005	168

DVR has an internal assistive technology training unit that provides evaluations, consultations, and training on an assortment of computer-based assistive technology. In addition to the 41 consumers who received AT training from DVR's internal accessibility training unit, five DVR staff took training on various assistive technologies. In addition, WestTAC project staff collaborates individually with DVR staff on the Western Slope to educate consumers and counselors about issues relating to assistive technology evaluations and equipment. The project is working to become fully staffed so these training opportunities may be increased.

Priority Two: Maintain sufficient organizational capacity to operate an effective vocational rehabilitation program.

Goal 1: Increase the visibility and public understanding of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Number of people who apply for DVR services	6749	Increase over 2005	4,897
Number of applicants determined eligible for DVR services	5015	Increase over 2005	3,851
DVR's application acceptance rate	71%	Increase over 2005	75%
Number of community educational events sponsored or attended by DVR	N/A	Gather Baseline	25

If DVR continues to receive the same number of applicants it has over the past nine months, it can expect to receive approximately 6,500 new applicants during SFY 2006. While this number is slightly lower than the number received during SFY 2005, DVR expects to determine approximately 5,100 of those applicants eligible. This 4% increase in the DVR acceptance rate means that the people who are applying for DVR services this year are more likely to become eligible for services, and can be at least partially attributed to the following efforts:

- During October and November of 2005, DVR conducted open houses across Colorado. Consumers, the public, and Colorado legislators were invited to visit a DVR office near them to learn more about the services that DVR provides.
- DVR published a "Facts at a Glance" sheet that highlighted key facts about the DVR program for 2005. These were handed out at the open houses as well as in educational forums throughout the year.
- DVR is currently in the process of publishing its fiscal year 2005 annual report, which will summarize key accomplishments for FY 2005.
- DVR has been visible at over 25 community educational events so far this fiscal year to provide information and education about the vocational rehabilitation program and to partner with other local agencies.

Goal 2: Increase the amount of financial support received from the State of Colorado for the DVR program.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Amount of state general fund dollars allocated to DVR.	3,074,130	3,147,443	3,360,000

DVR has requested a supplemental increase for SFY 2006 in the amount of \$450,000. This increase has been approved by Colorado's Joint Budget Committee, but has not yet been signed by the Governor. If signed, DVR's total SFY 2006 budget allocation will be 9.3% greater than its allocation for SFY 2005. This can be, at least partially, attributed to the following

accomplishments listed above. In addition, DVR published a monthly briefing that included the recent accomplishments of DVR, as well as a success story. This briefing was sent to Colorado's key legislators in an effort to keep them knowledgeable about the vocational rehabilitation program and its recent accomplishments.

Goal 3: Improve DVR's ability to maintain a full and competent staff.

Indicator	Performance on 6/30/05	Target for 6/30/06	Actual as of 3/22/06
Ratio of filled to vacant full time positions (average percent filled)	N/A	Gather Baseline	93.66%
Average amount of time it takes to fill a vacant position	N/A	Gather Baseline	108 days
Percentage of all staff departures that are due to reasons other than retirement	N/A	Gather Baseline	41%
Average supervisory rating on the CDHS Supervisory Feedback Survey	2.93 out of 4	Increase over 2005	Data not available at the time of this report.
Approximate number of training opportunities made available to staff	80	Increase over 2005	100
Number of training attendances by DVR staff	384	Increase over 2005	210*

**While this number looks much lower than it did during FY 2005, people were actually afforded more opportunities for training during FY 2006. DVR did not conduct a statewide conference during FY 2006, which accounts for 220 of the training attendances in FY 2005.*

DVR has undertaken the following initiatives in an effort to improve its ability to maintain a full and competent staff.

- In an effort to better understand the reasons that people leave the agency, DVR began conducting exit interviews with staff members who resigned for reasons other than retirement. Information from these interviews was compiled and provided to DVR's senior managers to be evaluated for potential system-wide changes.
- Beginning in November 2005, the Organizational and Staff Development Unit began providing a series of leadership training to first and second level supervisors as well as management staff at monthly meetings. Covered topics have included Teambuilding, Effective Communication, Conflict Resolution, Harassment in the Workplace, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Accommodations, and Work Scheduling Issues. This Leadership series will continue through state fiscal year 2007.
- DVR has developed a strong partnership with its Human Resources Department, maintaining open lines of communication. This partnership has allowed DVR to renew its waiver for hiring individuals living outside the State of Colorado.
- DVR conducted fourteen focus groups with staff from all eighteen of its offices during the month of October. The purpose of the focus groups was to solicit feedback about the current state of DVR and ideas for improving the work environment. The feedback received was summarized and will be incorporated into an action plan that will be completed during FY 2007.

Performance on Standards and Indicators pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act for FFY 2005

For federal fiscal year 2005, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation achieved successful performance on both Evaluation Standard #1 (employment outcomes) and Evaluation Standard #2 (equal access to services). The following table summarizes DVR's performance on all of the associated indicators.

Standards	Indicators	Required Levels	Performance	Colorado DVR FFY 2004 Performance
#1 Employment Outcomes	(1.1)	Equal or exceed previous performance period (greater than or equal to 0)		$(1936) - (1625) = 311$
	(1.2)	55.8%		$(1936/3246) \times 100 = 59.64\%$
	(1.3)	72.6%		$(1741/1936) \times 100 = 89.93\%$
	(1.4)	62.4%		$(1635/1741) \times 100 = 93.91\%$
	(1.5)	.52 (ratio)		$\$10.10 / \$19.08 = .53$
	(1.6)	53.0 (math difference)		$75.80 - 17.90 = 57.90$
#2 Equal Access to Services	(2.1)	.80 (ratio)		$41.29 / 47.71 = .87$

Use of Title I Funds for FFY 2005 Innovation and Expansion Activities

Total expenditures of Title I funds for innovation and expansion activities for FFY 2005 (October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005) were as follows:

Support of the State Rehabilitation Council	\$ 9,668
Support of the State Independent Living Council	\$ 35,356

Support of the State Rehabilitation and State Independent Living Councils. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation values and appreciates the collaborative efforts of both the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the State Independent Living Council (SILC). This positive collaborative working relationship has resulted in valued input and contributions to help DVR staff develop goals and priorities as well as strategies to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities as identified in the comprehensive needs assessment. In addition, the SRC is actively involved on an ongoing basis any time that DVR revisits and updates its service delivery policies and procedures. In 2007, DVR will continue to use Title I funds for innovation and expansion to provide staff support and to pay for the operating, travel, and per diem costs of members of the SRC and the SILC.

Progress toward achieving goals and plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds (Supported Employment)

Typically, DVR used 100% of its Title VI-B funds for the direct authorization of supported employment services. Title I funds are also used for supported employment services provided under cooperative agreements as well as for individual supported employment programs. As identified above, DVR's policy is to assure the provision of supported employment services to all who need it and DVR places no value on using Title VI-B funds as opposed to Title I. Thus,

it is impossible for DVR to separate its programmatic supported employment plans and goals into separate components for each funding source. Rather, DVR develops programming strategies for its entire supported employment program, which includes the use of Title VI-B and Title I funds.

As described above, DVR instituted in 2006 a new payment structure for mental health centers providing supported employment services to DVR clients. This new payment structure has resulted in better outcomes for consumers receiving these services, as well as better relationships with the centers that participate.

Although DVR has maintained a partnership with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) for some time now that allows Colorado's Community Centered Boards (CCB) to provide supported employment services to individuals whose IPEs require them, feedback from various sources has indicated that more could be done to ensure quality supported employment services. Therefore, DVR and DDD have entered into an intra-agency agreement in order to provide joint funding to pilot expanded provision of vocational rehabilitation supportive employment services for individuals with developmental disabilities. This MOU provides funding for 6.0 Full Time Equivalency (FTE) Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to provide vocational rehabilitation Supported Employment services for individuals with developmental disabilities who have been determined eligible and are recipients of services through the Community Centered Board (CCB) system. These six (6) FTE will be housed at local Community Centered Boards (CCB) and will focus on promoting successful community employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities for CCBs and DVR. This is a new pattern of services for DVR and will be piloted at six (6) locations throughout the state. The intent is to measure the effectiveness of counselors providing direct services to individuals with developmental disabilities and how this impacts successful employment outcomes. If the pilot, which ends June 30, 2008, is successful and there is a significant impact on the provision of quality services and employment outcomes, the program will be expanded to cover the balance of the state.

DVR continues to be represented on all local youth councils and workforce investment boards. Additionally, DVR is a member of the State Youth Council and the State Workforce Investment Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Colorado Workforce Development Council. These memberships allow DVR staff the opportunity to work with local workforce development partners to provide technical assistance, training and support as strategies, including supported employment strategies, are created throughout the state to meet the unmet needs of youth and adults with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities.

DVR is actively involved at both the state and local levels with Colorado Youth WINS (Work Incentive Network of Supports). This is a five-year Youth Transition Process Demonstration (YTPD) funded by Social Security Administration (SSA) and awarded to the University of Colorado Health Science Center's WIN Partners. The overarching goal of the demonstration project is to remove major barriers and disincentives to work for youth, aged 14-25, who receive SSI, SSDI or CDB, in order to maximize their economic self-sufficiency and career advancement. A significant number of youth involved in Colorado Youth WINS are youth in need of supported employment services.

ATTACHMENT 7.3

Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services

FY 2007

Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services

The 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, reinforce and expand the roles of both vocational rehabilitation counselors and consumers with regard to supported employment services. Effective delivery of supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities requires professionals to become even more creative in looking beyond the traditional array of practices and services. Therefore, the skill and experience of vocational rehabilitation counselors are key to the development of successful supported employment programs. Ongoing training efforts continue to focus on helping counselors and other involved professionals understand the importance of and develop skills necessary to assure thorough consumer evaluation; realistic goal setting; development of precise plans of services, including objective progress reporting for the continuous process; and, meaningful recordkeeping.

Direct utilization of Titles I (Vocational Rehabilitation Services) and VI-B (Supported Employment Services) case services funds facilitates the counselor's ability to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The resources available through the Title VI-B program are used only to provide supplemental evaluations and supported employment services, as identified in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), to assist eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain and secure community-integrated employment. Title VI-B funds are not used for services necessary to conduct the preliminary and comprehensive assessments to determine eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs or to provide job skill training unless it is provided at the worksite.

Supported employment services are provided to enable individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain employment, to learn job skills, and to maximize their hour and wage employment opportunities in the competitive labor force. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to provide a wide range of supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred or has been interrupted or intermittent and who need supported employment services and extended ongoing support services to attain and maintain integrated competitive employment.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Supplemental evaluations are provided subsequent to the development of the IPE when necessary to reassess the particular ongoing support services needed and/or the suitability of the particular placement. Supplemental evaluations focus on the individual's environment, such as the need for and type of job station modification, rather than on the individual's functional limitations. Such evaluations are subject to neither the individual's financial participation nor a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Job Placement is provided to assist the individual procure adequate and suitable employment in a competitive work setting. This service may be provided by the counselor directly or may be provided by other community programs. It is subject to neither the individual's financial participation nor a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Transitional employment services are a series of competitive job placements in integrated work settings which are provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illnesses when necessary to assist them achieve job permanency.

- Job seeking skills training is provided to teach individuals how to conduct a job search, how to prepare resumes and complete applications, and how to interview effectively. Job seeking skills may take place in a classroom setting, in a group setting, or on a one-to-one basis. When such services are included in plans of supported employment, they are normally provided in conjunction with transitional employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illnesses. Job seeking skills are not subject to a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Intensive job training is provided by skilled job trainers after the individual has been placed in an integrated work setting to assist the individual in attaining his or her weekly work goal at a competitive wage and to achieve job stabilization. Job coaching services are specialized training services provided by an individual other than the employer, and on-the-job supported employment training services are provided by the employer through the use of co-workers as natural supports. Job coaching and on-the-job training are subject to neither the individual's financial participation nor a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Personal adjustment training is provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities when necessary to develop compensatory skills and/or to adjust behavior in the areas of social skills, peer work relationships, and supervisory work relationships. Personal adjustment training is subject to neither the individual's financial participation nor a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Rehabilitation technology services are assistive technology devices, assistive technology services and rehabilitation engineering which are provided to meet the needs of and address the barriers encountered by an individual with the most significant disability in the areas of training, employment, transportation, and independent living. Such services include, but are not limited to, non-medical adaptive equipment and devices as well as environmental adaptations or alterations to home, training sites, and employment settings to increase access and successful performance for individuals with the most significant disabilities in supported employment. (Rehabilitation technology services provided to individuals during the preliminary and comprehensive assessments when necessary to determine eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs are not considered supported employment services.) Rehabilitation technology services are not subject to a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Follow-up services, including regular contact with the employer, trainee, job coach, and the parent or guardian, and regular observation or supervision of the individual with a most significant disability at the training site, are provided to assess the individual's progress and performance and to assist the individual prepare for and maintain supported employment in a competitive work setting. Such services are subject to neither the individual's financial participation nor a search for comparable services and benefits.
- Post-employment services are provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities to enable them to maintain or regain suitable supported employment in integrated work settings. Such services are limited interventions which are unavailable from the extended services provider. Post-employment services address or relate to vocational rehabilitation needs identified prior to the original case closure, and include, but are not limited to, job station redesign, repair and maintenance of assistive technology devices, and replacement of prosthetic appliances. Extensive training services are not available under the provisions of post-employment services.

- Any other vocational rehabilitation service may be provided when necessary to prepare and support the individual in supported employment. Such services include, but are not limited to, physical and mental restoration services; vocational adjustment and other vocational and academic training; occupational licenses, tools and equipment; specialized services for the blind and/or deaf; and, support services, such as maintenance, transportation, services to family members, and personal assistance services.

The IPE for supported employment for an eligible individual with the most significant disability will include the individual's weekly work goal, job stabilization criteria, the supported employment services to be provided, the type and frequency of monitoring contacts which will be provided during the provision of supported employment services, at least quarterly periodic monitoring of the individual's progress towards achieving the weekly work goal, and a description of extended services needed.

Supported employment services provided under Title VI-B and Title I are limited to eighteen months unless the IPE reflects that a longer period is necessary to achieve the weekly work goal and attain job stabilization before the individual with the most significant disabilities transitions to extended services. IPEs for supported employment are developed for a maximum of eighteen months. However, the IPE can be amended to provide a longer period of services when substantial progress has been made in attaining the weekly work goal and the individual and counselor agree that a longer period of services is needed to fully attain the weekly work goal and/or stabilize employment. Such circumstances typically mean that the individual's performance has shown steady progress during the last three months and that the individual has attained a minimum of 75% of his or her weekly work goal by the eighteenth month.

A national emphasis in supported employment to normalize the work setting for individuals with most significant disabilities is stronger than ever. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation agrees that it is important to minimize the intrusiveness of the job coach model and to replace it with a model of natural supports by utilizing supervisors, co-workers, and Employee Assistance Programs, when available and appropriate to the individual's needs. The Division will continue to support and expand the use of natural supports in the work place, including supervisors, co-workers, independent living centers, friends or volunteers/mentors, and family members, as the preferred supported employment model.

During the provision of supported employment services, assessing job stabilization and transition to extended services is the final phase of the vocational rehabilitation counselor's involvement in the provision of supported employment services. Job stabilization, which occurs when the individual can and is reasonably expected to continue to perform all job duties acceptably, should be attained prior to transition to extended services. The timing and flexibility of the transition process is critical to ensure that the individual's placement is not jeopardized once the job coach fades from the job site. Training and technical assistance will continue to be provided to counselors and other service providers on how to identify the appropriate time to fade job coaching services and when extended support services, including natural supports, should begin. DVR and Mental Health Services have developed written guidelines for mental health centers, which provide supported employment services to eligible individuals with serious mental illnesses, to clarify their role in the provision and funding of extended services.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes that the need for supported employment cannot be met by vocational rehabilitation agencies alone but requires the collaborative efforts of all providers of services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. In accordance with this

belief, DVR continues to analyze and address the systems barriers in Colorado which have historically hindered local delivery of supported employment services. Toward this end, the Center for Technical Assistance and Training will be used by DVR to facilitate the expansion of natural supports in the workplace and to implement Personal Futures Planning for individuals with the most severe disabilities receiving supported employment services from the Division. Personal Futures Planning is a holistic consumer-centered approach to ongoing personal growth in which the consumer directs a team in the development of a plan that becomes the strategy for achieving his or her life's goals. This method is believed to improve the individual's quality of life and ensure that the individual is working toward those goals, which are important to him or her. An integral quality of life indicator, which is encompassed in Futures Planning is planning with the consumer for and attaining meaningful competitive employment.

DVR, Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), and Mental Health Services (MHS) have created an environment, through collaborative policy development and innovative funding initiatives, which encourages local provider agencies to enhance existing supported employment services. Efforts range from adding a supported employment service option to developing programming where supported employment is the only service option available. These efforts continue through cooperative agreements between DVR, DDS and MHS to expand and develop methods to provide effective supported employment services to mutual consumers.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's strong commitment to facilitate coordination and development of community-based supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities is also reflected in the prioritization of supported employment initiatives through DVR's grant awarding process. As a result, increasing numbers of community rehabilitation programs throughout the State have developed supported employment services to supplement those provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.