



Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

State Plan 2008

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.

Nancy J. Smith

(Signature)

8.12.2007
(Date)

Nancy Smith

(Typed Name of Signatory)

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) Conduct of public meetings.**

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.

(b) Notice requirements.

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.

(c) Special consultation requirements.

The State Agency actively consults with the Director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a Council, and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

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 of Rehabilitation Services Administration the State and its supplement on the same date that the State submits a State plan under section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under section 501(b) of that Act.

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- (b) 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.
- (c) 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) Other updates of information required under Title I, part B or title VI, part B of the Act that are requested by the commissioner.
- (d) The State plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the State determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires 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; 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

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

- (a) 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.
- (b) The supported employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan

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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:
 - a state agency that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities; or
 - X a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.
- (3)** In American Samoa, the designated State agency is the Governor.

(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, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1 (a)(2)(B) of this section, 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 under the State Plan;

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- (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; and
- (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.

(2) The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation 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 and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with sub paragraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
 - (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

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- (4) Undertakes the functions set forth in section 105(c)(4) of the Act and 34 CRF 361.17(h)(4).

or

- (b) X The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in section 105 of the Act and 34 CRF 361.17 and the designated state unit:
- (1) Jointly with the Council develops, agrees to, and reviews annually state goals and priorities, and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress, in accordance with the provisions of section 101(a)(15) of the Act and 34 CRF 361.29 and section 4.11 of this State Plan;
 - (2) Regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation 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 State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the Council, described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Act and 34 CRF 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Act and 34 CRF 361.17(h)(4), 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 34 CRF 361 of the Act to be submitted to the commissioner;
 - (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 P and its supplement; and

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(C) Copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, 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 this section; 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)

The designated state agency takes into account; in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

- (a) Individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services, or as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;
- (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 a Council.

4.4 Non-federal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

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

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4.5 Local administration. (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.5z(b)(47) and .15)

(he State Plan provides for local administration of the plan by a local agency.

Yes___ No X

IF YES, the designated state agency:

- a) Ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program with the political subdivision that it serves; and
- b) Develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program, in accordance with the State Plan.

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

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 X

IF YES, the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

- (a) A description of the nature and scope of the joint program;
- (b) The services to be provided under the joint program;
- (c) The respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and
- (d) The share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

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4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Sections 101(a)(2)(A) and (4)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.25 and .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

- (a)** Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the State.
- (b)** The State unit may provide 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 if the:
 - (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;
 - (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; and
 - (3)** State, for purpose other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in **Attachment 4.7(b)(3)** a waiver of statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:
 - (A)** Identification of the types of services to be provided;
 - (B)** Written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the non-federal share of funds;
 - (C)** Written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
 - (D)** Written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.
- (c)** Contributions consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state maybe used as part of the non-federal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewidenenss requirement provided that the state notifies eth commissioner that it cannot provide the full non-federal share without using the earmarked funds.

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4.8 Cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B) and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23 and .24, and .31 and 363.11(e))

(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide workforce investment systems.

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide workforce investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide workforce investment system.

(b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

- (1)** Cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system;
- (2)** Coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3)** Establishment of cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
- (4)** Efforts 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 individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

- (1)** **Attachment 4.8(b)(2)** describes the 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 the responsibility of the designated state agency.
- (2)** The State Plan description must:

- (A) Provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and
- (B) Include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:
 - (i) 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;
 - (ii) 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;
 - (iii) Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
 - (iv) Procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.
- (d) **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 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.
- (e) **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 that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Act.

- (A) Strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will 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 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.
- (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.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and, .51(a) and (b))

(a) In general.

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the Plan and 34 CFR 361.

(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 Part B of Title I of the Act and this State Plan, 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) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations implementing these laws.

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

Attachment 4.10 describes the designated state agency's 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 includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

(1) Qualified personnel needs.

- (A)** The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- (B)** The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- (C)** Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

(2) Personnel development.

- (A)** A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- (B)** The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- (C)** The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

(b) Plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel.

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) **Personnel standards.**

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

(1) 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 (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.

(2) To the extent that existing 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 in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

(3) The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:

(A) Specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;

(B) The specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);

(C) Procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and

(D) The identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) **Staff development.**

Policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

(1) A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology.

(2) Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) **Personnel to address individual communication needs.**

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports. (Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.

(1) Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every 3 years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a Council). The assessment describes:

(A) 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
- (iii)** Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

(B) The need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

(2) For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

(b) **Annual estimates.**

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

- (1) Number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the Plan;
- (2) Number of eligible 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 subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) 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 (b)(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 4.11(c)(1)** identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- (2) The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.

(3) **Order of selection.**

If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, **Attachment 4.11(c)(3):**

- (A) Shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (B) Provides a justification for the order; and
 - (C) Identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- (4) **Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.**
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 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.

(d) **Strategies.**

(1) **Attachment 4.11(d)** describes the strategies, including:

- (A) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those

individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;

- (B) Outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
- (C) As applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs;
- (D) Strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Act; and
- (E) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

(2) **Attachment 4.11 (d)** describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:

- (A) Address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);
- (B) Support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the Plan; and
- (C) 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.**

- (1) The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a Council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.
- (2) **Attachment 4.11(e)(2):**
 - (A) Provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in **Attachment 4.11(c)(1)** and, if applicable, **Attachment 4.11(c)(3)** were achieved;
 - (B) Identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;
 - (C) Describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;

- (D) Assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Act; and
- (E) Provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

- (a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Act for the:
 - (1) 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 identified in **Attachment 4.11(a)** and goals and priorities of the state identified in **Attachments 4.11(c)(1)** and, if applicable, **Attachment 4.11(c)(3)**; and
 - (2) Support of the funding for 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 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).
- (b) **Attachment 4.11 (d)** describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.
- (c) **Attachment 4.11(e)(2)** describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 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 protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

SECTION 5: ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

5.1 Information and referral services. (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services, if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

5.3 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 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services.

Yes No X

(b) If "No":

- (1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
- (2) **Attachment 4.11(c)(3):**
 - (A) Shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (B) Provides a justification for the order of selection; and
 - (C) Identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- (3) Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

5.4 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 (b), 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.
- (b) 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, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system, 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.
- (c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:
 - (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 vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.
- (d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide workforce investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section

103(a) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

- (a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, an individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.
- (b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals, or, as appropriate, their representatives, are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

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.

5.8 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; 34 CFR 361.55)

- (a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:
 - (1) Who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or
 - (2) Whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.
- (b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for 2 years after the individual's record of services is closed (and 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.
- (c) The designated state unit 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 paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.
- (d) The individual with a disability, or, if appropriate, the individual's representative, has input into the review and reevaluation, and through signed acknowledgement attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, 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.
- (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.

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

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

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

SECTION 6: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 Designated state agency.** (Section 625(b)(1) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))
The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 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.
- 6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs.** (Section 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))
Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.
- 6.3 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 6.3 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. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private non-profit organizations, or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.
- 6.4 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 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Act.
- 6.5 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 4.8(b)(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.

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

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

6.7 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 commissioner 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 7: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

7.1 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.

7.2 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, Part B, 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.

SECTION 8: PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- 8.1 Scope of supported employment services.** (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))
- (a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).
 - (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.
- 8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities.** (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))
- The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Act and funded under Title I of the Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.
- 8.3 Individualized plan for employment.** (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))
- (a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 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
 - (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.

VR State Plan Attachments

Required Annually for All States

Attachment 4.10 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
Attachment 4.11(b) - Annual Estimates
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) - Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
Attachment 4.11(e)(2) - Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Signed original lobbying certification form (ED-80-0013) for the VR program
Signed original lobbying certification form (ED-80-0013) for the Supported Employment program.

Required Annually for all Agencies with a State Rehabilitation Council

(Agencies that are independent commissions do not provide this attachment).

Attachment 4.2(c) - Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required Annually for All Agencies on an Order of Selection

Attachment 4.11(c)(3) - Order of Selection

Required Whenever the Information Needs to be Updated

Attachment 4.7(b)(3) - Request for Waiver of Statewideness
Attachment 4.8(b)(1) - Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out
Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System
Attachment 4.8(b)(2) - Coordination with Education Officials
Attachment 4.8(b)(3) - Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit
Organizations
Attachment 4.8(b)(4) - Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the
Provision of Supported Employment Services
Attachment 4.11(a) - Statewide Assessment
Attachment 4.11(c)(1) - State Goals and Priorities
Attachment 4.11(d) - State's Strategies
Attachment 6.3 - Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Applicants must review the requirements for certification regarding lobbying included in the regulations cited below before completing this form. Applicants must sign this form to comply with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." This certification is a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Education relies when it makes a grant or enters into a cooperative agreement.

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

(a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;

(b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;

(c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants and contracts under grants and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certification.

NAME OF APPLICANT PR/AWARD NUMBER AND / OR PROJECT NAME Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE Nancy J. Smith, Director
SIGNATURE and DATE

Nancy J. Smith

8.12.2007

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 2008

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 State FY 2007, the SRC used its new internal organization to work more effectively with DVR. Some of the activities in which they were involved include planning for a customer

satisfaction survey and identifying the consultant who will conduct the survey; providing input into the format and subject area of the needs assessment to be conducted in early Federal FY 2008; and helping the agency to facilitate its annual public hearings.

The SRC made a specific recommendation asking DVR to target services in response to the needs of veterans who have been injured in the Iraq War. In response, DVR has:

- initiated a Budget Request to provide funding in State FY 2009 to increase the availability of vocational services for returning veterans;
- developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Veterans Administration in order to increase the level of collaboration with the Veterans Administration in the provision of services to the veterans returning from Iraq; and
- added the Colorado Traumatic Brain Injury Trust Fund program as another program administered by DVR. As of September 2007, the Colorado Traumatic Brain Injury Trust Fund program was transferred to DVR. The Trust Fund supports services for people with traumatic brain injury, as well as traumatic brain injury education and research. This new partnership will enable the Division to have a more active participation in the options for services to veterans with traumatic brain injury.

The SRC also asked DVR to incorporate the DVR Comprehensive Needs Assessment with the SRC Consumer Satisfaction Survey in 2010. However, DVR intends to change the current process of conducting the Comprehensive Needs Assessment once every three years. In Federal FY 2009, DVR intends to begin conducting a portion (approximately one-third) of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment each year, as is currently being done in other states. DVR determined there are many benefits in doing a smaller needs assessment each year, and it would be possible at that time to look at incorporating consumer satisfaction surveys with this new process.

ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(1)

Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Entities

FY 2008

ATTACHMENT 4.8 (b)(1)

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

FY 2008

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 Fifteen (15) Mental Health Centers throughout the State. As more funding becomes available, DVR would approach currently nonparticipating Centers for inclusion into this program. 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 Department of Social Services and Adams County 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. 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, and began providing data for this project in State FY 2007.

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.

DVR entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and in State FY 2007 hired Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for six out of seven local CCBs that are offering office space for DVR counselors. These counselors focus on promoting successful community employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities who have been determined eligible and are recipient of services through the CCB system. In the other areas of the state, DVR counselors and supervisors meet frequently with Community Centered Board staff to coordinate services delivery

The collaboration between DVR and the CCBs 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.

DVR now has a statewide Job Development Coordinator housed in the Denver metropolitan area, who will coordinate the activities of nine Outreach Specialists located around the state. Their duties will be to market DVR's capabilities to businesses and in return to gain an understanding of their business needs. This knowledge will allow DVR to better prepare consumers for employment, and match their qualifications with business needs. DVR will also use Disability Program Navigators within the Workforce Centers to provide additional job placement services to consumers..

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 has a Migrant Grant program, which is managed out of our Pueblo Office by Sam Medina a DVR Counselor. (this should probably be addressed by the field services group)
- DVR receives and administers the Older Individuals who are Blind program throughout the State DVR administers the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) program mandated by Title VII, Chapter 2 of the Act. The program serves people 55 and older who are blind or visually impaired. Typically, these are people who are experiencing low vision from age-related factors, and they are concerned about losing their independence. The OIB program helps them to learn new skills and identify community resources that will allow them to live full, independent lives in their own homes. The federal grant is awarded to eligible vendors across the state through a competitive RFP process on a three year funding cycle.
- 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.
- Chamber of Commerce memberships are being used by some DVR Field Offices to generate relationships with more local employers. DVR anticipates more Field Offices to become members of their local Chambers of Commerce in Federal FY 2008.

All counselors and local supervisors have increased interactions with all vendors of services due to the Division's 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 4.8 (b)(2)

Coordination with Education Officials

FY 2008

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, and that the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for students who are eligible for VR services will be developed and approved before these students leave the school setting (or if Colorado DVR is operating under an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting). 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-six sites. These forty-six sites involve more than 150 of Colorado's 178 school districts. SWAP serves over 3000 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. During the last four years, the activities provided under this grant have resulted in greater numbers of youth with disabilities receiving braided services through the workforce development system. Additionally, activities under this grant have been identified by the Colorado State Youth Council and by NCWD's ProBank as promising practices. DVR has committed staff to this project, and will continue to be involved in sustaining the activities of the project beyond the duration of the five-year grant and beyond.

DVR continues to maintain membership on the Colorado State Youth Council, which is a subcommittee of the Colorado Workforce Development Board. One goal of the State Youth Council is to identify and support existing strategies, practices and projects that demonstrate success, and to augment and place successful practices throughout Colorado. Each year, local communities are invited to submit local promising practices to the SYC that effectively address the needs of youth who are transitioning to adulthood. Submissions are scored against the National Center on Workforce and Disability's (NCWD) evidence-based Design Guideposts for Success. These are: school preparation; youth development and leadership; career preparation; connecting activities; and family involvement and supports. The SYC recognizes selected promising practices each year at the Think Big Youth Forum. The Think Big Youth Forum is sponsored by the SYC, the Colorado Department of Labor, the Office of Workforce Development, the Colorado Department of Education and DVR. The Youth Forum brings together statewide youth practitioners from vocational rehabilitation, education and workforce development for two days of professional development. The promising practices recognized at the Forum are highlighted and receive a monetary award to further the efforts of the practice or program.

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. In July 2006, DVR, the Department of Education, and two institutions of higher education presented our transition successes in the post-secondary realm at the national AHEAD conference in San Diego, CA.

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.

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 2006, DVR and the Department of Education hosted a statewide conference 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 Fall 2006 CSAVR conference that was held in San Francisco. Additionally, DVR plans to present at multiple statewide and regional conferences on an ongoing basis. Also, CDE and DVR Transition Specialists present information and training 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 will develop an outreach and presentation toolkit for DVR counselors who are working with school districts, youth and parents. DVR has identified, as a pilot, a dedicated transition specialist counselor on the eastern plains of the State. In addition to typical transition services for youth, this position has a focus on earlier outreach, consultation, technical assistance and identification.

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.

The DVR Youth Unit has connected and is working with the transition subcommittee of the State Independent Living Council. The purpose of this connection is to provide mentoring to young adults who sit on the SILC, as well as to explore possibilities within the Independent Living Center system for providing improved and increased transitions services to youth. We are also exploring the option of hosting a Colorado Youth Forum.

Since 2005, DVR has been a key player in Colorado's Policy Academy on Improving Outcomes for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities. This Policy Academy was awarded to Colorado through a competition made available through the National Governor's Association's Center for Best Practices. The goals of the Colorado NGA Academy include: the development of policy; outreach, education and training for agencies, youth and families; and improved collection and use of shared data across agencies. As a part of this Academy, the interagency core team developed YouthNet, a searchable database for transitioning youth and their families. As the funding available through the Policy Academy winds down, the activities and interagency partnerships developed as a result of the Academy will continue, and DVR will continue to be at the table.

In 2007, DVR became a member of the Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth (ACHY). The ACHY meets quarterly and serves as the statewide strategic planning body around youth homelessness in Colorado. The committee developed and is implementing an action plan that involves the following committees: prevention; documentation; housing; supportive services; futures planning; and outreach.

In 2007, DVR took over the responsibility for the twenty Colorado Disability Program Navigators (DPN), who are housed in workforce centers throughout the state. The Youth Unit is exploring the possibility of the DPN's providing basic vocational screening and testing to persons with disabilities, including students and out of school youth, who would benefit from these services that are available through workforce centers and DVR offices. During the upcoming fiscal year, DVR will provide training to the DPNs and DVR staff, so they can better incorporate appropriate assessment strategies when administering brief vocational tests and other assessments to youth with disabilities. Additionally, DVR is partnering with two local workforce centers and local school districts throughout the state to provide benefit planning to persons with disabilities, including students and out of school youth, who can benefit from this service.

ATTACHMENT 4.8 (b)(3)

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

FY 2008

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.

ATTACHMENT 4.8 (b)(4)

Evidence of Collaboration Regarding
Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

FY 2008

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 2008, 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 \$493,932.00. 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 \$970,585.00 during SFY 08.

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. DVR and DMH 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. 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 lead 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 4.10

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

FY 2008

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 within the Employee Database of the RISE application. It contains information on offices to which staff are assigned, functional job titles, and caseload information. DVR uses these two databases as well as additional paper records to continuously gather and analyze information about the qualifications of the 258 full time positions held by DVR staff.

Currently, of the 258 full time positions within DVR, approximately 150 of them are vocational rehabilitation counselors. The remaining 108 full time positions consist of administrative assistants, program assistants, office managers, district and regional supervisors, job placement specialists, Disability Program Navigators, 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 current attrition rate of DVR staff averages about 10%, or approximately 25 staff per year. Given DVR's current efforts to effectively retain high quality staff, it is projected that will approximately 50 staff will leave during the next three years, of which 30 will be vocational rehabilitation counselors, 15 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 35 vocational rehabilitation counselors and 15 support staff over the next three 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.

Current Status of Qualified Personnel. Of the 113 individuals currently in filled rehabilitation counselor positions within DVR, 108 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, four individuals have recently been hired using the rehabilitation counseling intern classification and will be completing CSPD education plans within the next 5 years. The other individual is simply gaining acceptable employment experience as defined by CRCC and will be qualified to sit for the CRC exam within the next 2 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 a Master's level program that prepares vocational rehabilitation counselors. Graduates of the rehabilitation counseling program possess the credentials necessary for certification in rehabilitation counseling (CRC). Faculty at UNC indicates that since Oct 1st, 2006, UNC has had 6 Masters Level graduates in Rehab Counseling and 6 doctoral graduates in Rehabilitation. There are currently 14 Masters level students enrolled in the Rehabilitation Counseling program.

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 Utah State University 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 19.6% of the individuals who apply for DVR services are Hispanic, 2.7% are Native American, and 1.0% 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 15 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 4.8(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.

*Due to a major change in reporting, people can now choose multiple categories when selecting Ethnicity.

ATTACHMENT 4.11

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

FY 2008

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (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 2008

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 4.11(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 State FY 2006 State Plan. Therefore, the DVR responses below reflect our responses at the time the State FY 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 Federal FY 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.

State FY 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 4.11(c)(1).

Federal FY 2008 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 4.11(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 4.11(e)(2), DVR was able to continue paying a job placement bonus of \$400 in State FY 2007, with an additional bonuses for placements where exceptional wages were offered to the job seeker. As noted on page 5 of attachment 4.11(d) Part 1, In State FY 2007, DVR implemented the Employer Outreach

Program, which will allow DVR to better prepare consumers for employment and match their qualifications with business needs.

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.

State FY 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 State FY 2006 aimed at increasing the amount of assistive technology training available to consumers. These strategies can be found in attachment 4.11(d) Part 1.

Federal FY 2008 Response: DVR has completed a complete revision to its policy and procedure manual. DVR has determined that its revised policies and procedures do not create any artificial roadblocks to providing training services when necessary and appropriate. As noted in attachment 4.11(e)(2), DVR modified the State FY 2008 fee schedule to increase fees paid for medical services to match those paid by the State's Worker's Compensation Division. In addition, DVR staff participated in a variety of training and professional development activities, designed to support the daily work of the counselors and promote the achievement of the DVR mission. Also, DVR continues to provide intensive training curriculum that focuses specifically on job development and job placement. The ability of DVR to appropriately identify and provide these services to consumers, when necessary and appropriate, will have a direct impact on the following goals, as outlined in attachment 4.11(c)(1): "Improve the effectiveness of the service delivery process for all individuals", "Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals". Also, DVR has an internal assistive technology training unit that provides evaluation, consultations, and training on an assortment of computer-based assistive technology. For Federal FY 2008, DVR has identified a need for additional resources in this area and have allocated additional FTE for assistive technology training. This has a direct impact on the following goal outlined in attachment 4.11(c)(1): "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.

State FY 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 State 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.

Federal FY 2008 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 4.11(d) Part 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 several 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

State FY 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 State 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.

Federal FY 2008: As noted in attachment 4.11(e)(2), DVR was able to raise the fees paid for medical services for State FY 2008. In addition, DVR continues in its collaboration with the Mental Health Vocational Consortium. One initiative was to convert 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. The Consortium is currently conducting evaluations of services provided through Fund 7; with the final report due in September 2007. 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.

State FY 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.

Federal FY 2008 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 4.11(d) Part 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 hired an Outreach Coordinator and nine Outreach Specialists whose roles will be specifically focused on education and outreach. These positions 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.

State FY 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 State 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 State 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 4.11(c)(1).

Federal FY 2008 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 4.11(d) part 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. In Federal FY 2008 DVR will be implementing a pilot project

using advanced communication technology to provide individuals who are deaf with a communication system which allows them to both send and receive voice mails.

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.

State FY 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.

Federal FY 2008 Response: As noted in attachment 4.11(e)(2), DVR completely revised its Policy Manual. The new manual reduces repetition, enhances readability, improves the overall organization, creates additional chapters, provides greater alignment with federal regulations and is more user friendly. 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.

Since the last comprehensive assessment was completed, DVR has identified through both the public hearings conducted in the fall of 2004, 2005 and 2006, 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 4.11(d) Part 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 4.8(b)(3). 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 4.11 (b)

Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

FY 2008

Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

DVR anticipates for Federal FY 2008 it will provide vocational rehabilitation services to approximately 5.3% more individuals than during Federal FY 2007. Approximately 7,479 individuals will be provided diagnostic services pursuant to determining eligibility. Of the 17,420 eligible individuals that DVR anticipates it will provide vocational rehabilitation services to, it is estimated that 16,200 individuals will receive services provided with funds under Title I part B of the Act and that 1,220 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 October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008 appear on the following chart.

ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS AND SERVICE COSTS BY PRIORITY CATEGORY* October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008

	Eligible Individuals	Service Costs
Individuals with most significant disabilities	9,103	\$ 13,383,791
Individuals with significant disabilities	7,476	12,113,720
Individuals with least significant disabilities	841	924,173
TOTALS	17,420	\$ 25,189,263

*This does not include an additional \$1,424,082 that DVR expects to spend on assessment services provided pursuant to eligibility.

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c)(1)

State's Goals and Priorities

FY 2008

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 4.11(a) of this state plan, as well as DVR's internal needs, DVR collaborated with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) 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 continue to be carried over as goals for Federal Fiscal year October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008. Colorado's SRC is scheduled to conduct the next comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities beginning in September 2007. Therefore, the State's Goals and Priorities will not be updated until the results of the new needs assessment can be analyzed and the influence on long term goals and priorities can be determined.

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

Goals	Measures*
Goal #1: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for all individuals.	• Total number of successful post-IPE closures. • Percentage of all post-IPE closures that were closed successfully.
Goal #2: Improve the effectiveness of DVR's service delivery process for individuals who are deaf and for individuals who have mental health needs.	• 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.
Goal #3: Improve the quality of job placements for all individuals.	• 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".
Goal #4: Increase the availability of consumer assistive technology training to allow them to more effectively participate in their rehabilitation program	• 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.	• 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.	• Amount of state general fund dollars allocated to DVR
Goal #3: Improve DVR's ability to maintain a full and competent staff.	• 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. • 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 4.11 (c)(3)

Order of Selection

FY 2008

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.

In State FY 2007, DVR's general fund state tax dollar budget increased to \$1.8 million and 24.2 FTE for DVR staff positions were restored. In addition, there was new funding and additional FTE for two new projects and for improvements to the BEP program. Therefore, DVR was able to begin serving individuals in all priority categories during State FY 2007. However, because these dollars are not guaranteed for longer than the state fiscal year DVR will continue its Order of Selection in Federal FY 2008.

DVR expects to be able to serve individuals in all priority categories in the foreseeable future, however will continue with Order of Selection should a decline in the State's economy result in future budget reductions.

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
October 1, 2006 - September 30, 2007

	Eligibility Decisions	New Plans	26 Closures	Active Eligible Records
Individuals with most significant disabilities	3,329	2,319	1,247	8,660
Individuals with significant disabilities	2,745	1,760	1,137	7,023
Individuals with least significant disabilities	212	189	128	851
TOTALS	6,286	4,268	2,512	16,534

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c)(4)

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

FY 2008

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 State FY 2007 has spent almost \$760,000 for supported employment services, using both Title VI B and Title I funds. 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 entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and in State FY 2007 hired Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for six out of seven local Community Centered Boards (CCB) that are offering office space for DVR counselors. These counselors will continue to focus on promoting successful community employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities who have been determined eligible and are recipients of services through the CCB system. In the other areas of the state, DVR counselors and supervisors will meet frequently with CCB staff to coordinate services delivery
- 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 4.11 (d)

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

FY 2008

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (d)

Part 1: To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve
Identified Goals and Priorities

FY 2008

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

As identified in section 4.11(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. The Resource Management module was rolled out in May and June 2007 and is now operational statewide. RISE design teams will continue working during state fiscal year 2008 to complete design plans for the Case Management, Case Service Accounting and Management Reporting modules, which are scheduled for implementation beginning in August 2008. In addition to the development of RISE, DVR completed and disseminated a new policy manual on January 1, 2007. All staff received training on the new policy manual. This policy manual is in a user-friendly format including automated links to chapters within the policy manual itself and also hyperlinks to other resources. The new manual is much clearer and is a resource where the user can access the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, federal regulations and DVR guidance all in one place. This new manual 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 State FY 2007, duties for quality assurance were moved into the Organizational and Staff Development unit and a new Policy & Quality Assurance Specialist was hired. Through this process, the quality assurance process is being enhanced by developing smaller case review teams which will travel to local offices each month to conduct a comprehensive case review on a smaller number of files. Supervisors continue to conduct quality assurance reviews at their office levels, using the same tool that is used statewide; the School to Work Program files are reviewed when they conduct contract-related monitoring reviews.

Strategy #3: Examine the feasibility of structural modifications to the fee schedule. Recently, DVR modified its State FY 2008 fee schedule to increase fees paid for medical services to match those paid by the State's Worker's Compensation Division. In addition, adjustments were made in the fee structure and the payment amount allowable for selected vocational services. For Federal FY 2008 DVR will continue 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 in

State FY 2007 opened offices in several rural areas of Colorado. These areas include: Rocky Ford, Ft. Morgan, Summit County-Silverthorne, Edwards, and Trinidad. DVR also opened a new metro location in Aurora. DVR will open two additional offices in Longmont and the southern metro Denver area by the end of 2007. DVR utilized 24 new positions to staff all of the new offices, increasing DVR's ability to serve its consumers in a more effective and efficient manner.

In Federal FFY 2008 DVR is planning to secure the services of a contractor to continue to improve the agency website. In addition 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 feature 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 continues its efforts to find resolutions to one of the most frequent barriers cited by DVR's customers: access to accessible, safe, reliable and affordable transportation for work, training and other facets of community life. In addition to the Division's efforts, DVR also partners with other agencies to work together to accomplish these shared goals. DVR is still actively involved with the Denver Regional Mobility and Accessibility Coalition (DRMAC). Also the Division Director serves on the Interagency Coordinating Council on Transportation Accessibility and Mobility (ICCTAM). In this capacity, the Director recently reviewed grant applications for the federal New Freedom Initiative that is designed to create transportation opportunities beyond the requirements of the ADA. In addition, DVR plans to build a program fund that will encourage rural communities to apply for federal funding such as New Freedom or Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) by helping them acquire the matching dollars necessary to pursue such options. In this manner, DVR will ensure that lasting transit infrastructure is created in small and rural communities.

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 State FY 2008, 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 July of 2007 the needs for transition training were assessed, and other training needs were assessed in October & November of 2006. These assessments will be used to help determine the training that will be developed and offered to DVR staff over the next few years. In addition to offering a wide variety of training sessions to staff during Federal FY 2008, the unit is currently planning a statewide conference to be held during the summer of 2008. This conference will be made available to all staff and will be an opportunity for DVR staff to become familiar with the RISE modules that will be rolled out in August of 2008.

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 State FY 2007, DVR hired Orientation and Mobility Instructors in Pueblo, Colorado Springs and Fort Collins. These positions provide outreach to rural areas across the state.

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 who is now housed with the City and County of Denver, through June 30, 2008. This position is 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 entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Division of Developmental Disabilities and in State FY 2007 hired Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for six out of seven local Community Centered Boards that are offering office space for DVR counselors. These counselors 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 Federal FY 2008 to keep the lines of communication open with regard to improving services for these individuals. The program will be evaluated during July and August of 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. 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. DVR has begun 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. In Federal FY 2008, DVR is planning to begin a pilot project using advanced communication technology to provide individuals who are deaf with a communication system which allows them to both send and receive voice mails. Also, two new deaf Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors in the Denver metro area to meet the cultural needs of deaf consumers.

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. Information regarding this type of classification was requested and obtained from other states. DVR also conducted focus groups statewide to help shape the position, and are developing new Position Description Questionnaires (state personnel classification forms) based on all the information gathered. 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 developed a training curriculum entitled "Working Effectively with People with Mental Illness". for Rehabilitation Counselors and administrative staff that focuses on mental health issues. In addition to providing basic information for about mental illness, the training covers topics such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, including desk aids and resources, personality disorders, and new treatment methods. In State FY 2007 several sessions of "Working Effectively with People with Mental Illness" were held statewide. DVR will continue to provide this training in Federal FY 2008.

Strategy #6: Work with a vendor to develop a peer mentoring program.—This program is no longer in effect. It was piloted last year, but the project didn't get the response that was expected.

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. DVR plans to cultivate the skills and infrastructure across the organization and not rely as heavily on external vendors for these services. In State FY 2007, DVR implemented the Employer Outreach Program. DVR now has a statewide Job Development Coordinator housed in the Denver metropolitan area, who will coordinate the activities of nine Outreach Specialists located around the state. Their duties will be to market DVR's capabilities to businesses and in return to gain an understanding of their business needs. This knowledge will allow DVR to better prepare consumers for employment, and match their qualifications with business needs. DVR will also use Disability Program Navigators within the Workforce Centers to provide additional job placement services to consumers.

Strategy #2: Build stronger community connections. During Federal FY 2008, 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. Chamber of Commerce memberships are being used by some DVR Field Offices to create closer relationships with local employers. DVR anticipates more Field Offices to become members of the local Chambers of Commerce in Federal FY 2008.

In addition, the Employer Outreach Program staff will reach out to community partners and discuss how DVR can improve our working relationships. The staff will discuss these opportunities with DVR management, identify possible solutions, and will then implement approved strategies. DVR will also build stronger working relationships with our partners by better educating them about DVR services and how DVR can be most effective in service delivery to consumers.

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. In State FY 2007 Assistive Technology Partners held statewide sessions to discuss assistive technology. Assistive Technology Partners also met with the DVR management team to talk about developing some of the new technology they have available. During Federal FY 2008, 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. During State FY 2007 DVR was the sponsor for an Accessing Higher Ground conference. Also, many DVR

Counselors from Colorado attended and assistive technology fair in South Dakota. 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. Also, in FFY 2008, DVR will be allocating one additional position for assistive Technology training needs.

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. For several years, DVR has 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 Federal FY 2008, in an effort to develop greater levels of public understanding about the program. Continuous education about the vocational rehabilitation program has become especially critical with a newly elected Governor in Colorado and many new legislators in the Colorado 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 2006, DVR revived the development of this process and distributed an annual report that summarized its key accomplishments for State FY 2006. 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 State FY 2007, DVR began an update of its website in order to create a more user-friendly, accessible site for potential and current DVR consumers, employers, and providers, which provides current, simple, and appropriate information. The new website provides basic information about DVR and the services provided,, locations of DVR offices throughout the state, steps to employment, employment tools, and information about each of our specialty programs. During Federal FY 2008, DVR will continue to improve the website to include more information about DVR's application process, eligibility requirements, provide more in-depth information about the services available, access to DVR forms and also add email links to each DVR office, In order to further facilitate cooperation and collaboration, with DVR's partners, DVR is also planning on dedicating an area of the website to provide links to the information websites of our partners, and also provide

basic information about working with DVR's partners. The DVR website is compliant with Section 508 standards, making it fully accessible to persons with disabilities. .

Strategy #4: Enhance the quality of DVR's outreach strategy and materials. The new Employer Outreach Program will have the responsibility of preparing a Marketing Plan, which will document how DVR will market itself to prospective businesses. The Marketing Plan will include promotional strategies and materials such as brochures, flyers, print media advertising, public events, radio announcements, and possible T.V. ads. The Employer Outreach Program staff will also be quite involved in attending various marketing events, including but not limited to Chamber of Commerce functions and other community events.

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 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 in an effort to develop greater levels of public understanding about the program.

Strategy #2: Responsible use of new resources. For State FY 2007 DVR's general fund state tax dollar budget increased to \$1.8 million and 24.2 FTE for DVR staff were restored. In addition, there was new funding and additional FTE for two new projects and for improvements to the BEP program. The new funding, staff and projects will continue to enhance DVR's ability to effective service delivery into the next few years. DVR will plan and carefully execute a strategy to ensure that these additional dollars are continued to be spent fully, accurately, effectively, and efficiently. DVR will provide reports 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. As of January 1, 2007, the Department of Humans Services, (DVR's parent agency) had a new Executive Director; Karen Beye. Over the last few months, DVR has provided her with some general education about the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the important role it plays in our State. DVR will continue to provide this type of education and identify additional 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 Federal FY 2008, DVR's administrative office will participate in a newly developed process to train volunteers from all staffing levels to conduct exit surveys. Individuals from the Exit Survey Team will collect feedback from every person who leaves DVR. The feedback will be used to identify trends which can help design and implement system-side changes in order to try and retain top talent in the future.

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 continue to be opportunities during Federal FY 2008 as DVR continues to fill vacancies in the counselor series, explores the possibilities of using rehabilitation technicians, and creates new specialty positions in its state office. During Federal FY 2008, 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, several years ago, 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. All DVR supervisors are highly encouraged to attend these trainings.

Strategy #3: Strengthen our partnership with the human resources unit within the Colorado Department of Human Services. In 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. In 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 State FY 2007, 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 Federal FY 2008. Also, DVR will continue to encourage the use the Rewards and Incentives program, developed during State FY 2007 to address issues identified in these focus groups, which gives supervisors and managers greater flexibility in their ability to reward their staff in meaningful ways.

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (d)

Part 2: To Carry Out Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant
Disabilities Who are Minorities

FY 2008

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 SFY 2006	Successfully Rehabilitated SFY 2006	Colorado Population
Caucasian	88.7%	84.2%	90.3%
Hispanic	19.6%	17.9%	19.5%
African American	8.5%	6.6%	4.1%
Native American	2.7%	1.9%	1.1%
Asian	1.0%	1.6%	2.7%
	120.5%*	112.2%	117.7%

Source: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation applications taken and persons successfully rehabilitated between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006 and 2005 State census data.

* Because of a major change in census and other reporting, people can now choose multiple categories of Ethnic Groups; therefore the totals will always be over 100%.

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 19.6% 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 multi-line 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 4.11 (d)

Part 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 2008

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, which 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 4.11 (e)(2)

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

FY 2008

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 for the 2007 State Plan year which was the State FY July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. In the future, these indicators will be measured for the based on the 2008 State Plan submitted for Federal FY 2008. Thus, at the time that this report is submitted, DVR has data for only 9 months of the current Federal FY year ending September 30, 2007.

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 For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Target for Federal FY ending 9/30/07	Actual through 6/30/07 for Federal FY 07
Total number of successful post-IPE closures	2,375	2,512	1,884
Percentage of all post-IPE closures that were closed successfully	57.4%	60.9%	60.9%

For State FY 2007 DVR improved the number of successful post-IPE closures by 224 or 10.4 percent. That number is anticipated to increase to 2,512 by the end of Federal FY 2007. The rehabilitation rate for was well above the federally required level, with a projection of 60.9% of post-IPE closures being closed successfully, We anticipate the rehabilitation rate will continue to rise as the strategies DVR put into place during State FY 2007 help us achieve higher levels of performance. These strategies include:

- The completion of a new DVR Policy Manual. The new Policy Manual reduces repetition, enhances readability, improves the overall organization, creates additional chapters, provides greater alignment with federal regulations, and is more user friendly. Each chapter begins with a section from the federal regulations in order for staff to continue to familiarize themselves with pertinent regulations. Within each chapter and section staff are able to click on hyperlinks and directly go to the Social Security website, the Client Assistance Program website, the federal regulations website, etc. A permanent policy committee will meet regularly to review and provide clarification for future policy issues. In addition, the release of the new manual provided an excellent opportunity to conduct an overall policy training that was intended to review virtually all aspects of DVR policy.
- In conjunction with the new Policy Manual DVR continues to make strides to minimize the time necessary to effectively and completely document the VR process. Therefore, during FFY 2007 DVR has introduced new forms and will ensure that these new forms will be available to all counselors in easy-to-use electronic formats, and that all staff will have a solid understanding of the required information for the new forms. Quality assurance reviews have revealed that the process of updating forms is doing a good job assisting counselors in providing succinct, efficient documentation for their service records and expediting the service provision process.

- DVR has continued to make progress toward the development of the RISE application, an automated Rehabilitation Information System for Employment. The Resource Management module, which includes a vendor database, was deployed statewide during April and May 2007. Currently, small groups of counselors and other subject matter experts are working to define requirements and design the Case Management and Case Service Accounting modules, scheduled to be implemented in August 2008.
- DVR's internal quality assurance team has continued to conduct statewide case reviews during State FY 2007 using a team of district and regional supervisors as well as additional administrative staff. Both positive and constructive feedback from these reviews were provided to each rehabilitation counselor, as well as to members of the Field Services Management Team for continuous quality improvement discussions and continued modification of DVR documentation. DVR will continue utilize a team of district and regional supervisors and administrative staff as the internal quality assurance team in Federal FY 2008.
- DVR increased its accessibility across the state by opening or reopening new offices. In rural areas these offices include; Rocky Ford, Ft. Morgan, Frisco, Edwards, and Trinidad. Metro locations include; Aurora, Longmont and the South Metro Office. All of these offices will be open by the end of FFY 2007.
- Recently, DVR modified its State FY 2008 fee schedule to increase fees paid for medical services to match those paid by the State's Worker's Compensation Division. In addition, adjustments were made in the fee structure and the payment amount allowable for selected vocational services. For Federal FY 2008 DVR will continue 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.
- DVR's state office continues to communicate on a monthly basis to all DVR staff on how well DVR is performing on the standards and indicators, as well as the progress made towards achieving the state and federal goals for the standards and indicators.
- During State FY 2007, DVR staff participated in a variety of training and professional development activities. These activities were designed to support the daily work of the counselors and promote the achievement of the DVR mission. Examples of the numerous training topics addressed include American Sign Language, Vocational Rehabilitation Leadership, Traumatic Brain Injury, Supported Employment, Self-Employment, Social Security issues, Dealing with Difficult Customers, Customer Service, Job Placement, and various other topics relating to specific disabilities and steps in the VR process. In addition, the Organizational & Staff Development Unit continues to provide high quality in-house training to new staff using an established new counselor training curriculum as well as a network of lead/mentoring.

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 For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Target for Federal FY ending 9/30/07	Actual through 6/30/07 for Federal FY
Percentage of all deaf or hard-of-hearing post-IPE closures that were closed successfully	70.5%	79.8%	79.8%
Percentage of all mental health post-IPE closures that were closed successfully	56.1%	59.2%	59.2%

While this will continue to be an area of focus for DVR for during Federal FY 2008, we took the following steps during State FY 2007 to begin to enhance our effectiveness with these two populations:

- DVR continues in its collaboration with the Mental Health Vocational Consortium, whose purpose is to facilitate ongoing communication between DVR and the Division of Mental Health through quarterly meetings. The Consortium is currently conducting evaluations of services provided through Fund 7; with the final report due in September 2007.
- The Division of Mental Health (DMH) and 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 part of this collaborative effort, DMH and DVR are currently conducting evaluations of services provided through Fund 7; with the final report due in September 2007.
- 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.
- DVR continues to work with the SRC to conduct a formal evaluation of the DVR services provided to individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. 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. DVR will use the information gathered to compare the quality of employment outcomes for this population with the employment outcomes of the program as a whole.
- DVR has begun 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. Also, two new deaf Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors in the Denver metro area to meet the cultural needs of deaf consumers.
- DVR continues to promote the use of highly qualified interpreters for the deaf. All DVR field offices are required to set aside a portion of the operating funds in order to insure that DVR has adequate resources available for interpretation services.

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

Indicator	Performance For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Target for Federal FY ending 9/30/07	Actual through 6/30/07 for Federal FY
Percentage of successful closures that are in competitive employment	78.6%.	79.1%	79.1%
Average hourly wage for successful competitive closures	\$11.21	\$11.27	\$11.27
Average difference between weekly wages earned at application and at closure for successful competitive closures	\$279.85	\$277.97	\$277.97

While DVR has made progress on this goal, it will continue to be a focus area in Federal FY 2008.

- DVR continues to support a job placement incentive program through which counselors can be paid a bonus for job placements, with an additional bonus for exceptional wages.
- DVR had hired 24.0 additional rehabilitation counselors, one Job Development Coordinator in the state office who will be responsible for job development statewide and 9 additional Employment Outreach and Community Education Specialists.
- DVR continues to provide intensive training curriculum that focuses specifically on job development and job placement. This training will be repeated throughout the year to ensure that all new 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. Beginning in July 2007, DVR assumed management of the Disability Program Navigators, consisting of twenty positions located throughout the State who are housed in Workforce Centers (WFC). Their role is to act as facilitators to ensure collaboration and coordination between Workforce Center staff and DVR staff, and to increase the positive perception that people with disabilities are individuals that have abilities, who want to and can work, and can be and should be included in the trainings and other offerings available to all customers of the Workforce Centers. Specifically, they problem solve with Workforce Center staff and DVR staff regarding individual clients, act as expert resources for referrals to other community agencies and employers, offer limited service to clients waiting to get DVR services, and develop stronger networks among the WFCs, DVR and other community agencies.
- DVR will be leading the effort to continue with an annual Job Fair for People with Disabilities. 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 For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Target for Federal FY ending 9/30/07	Actual through 6/30/07 for Federal FY
Number of consumers receiving assistive technology training services through purchased services	257	241	181
Number of consumers receiving computer accessibility training services through DVR's internal training program	59	69	52
Number of vendors available to DVR for the provision of assistive technology training	123	123	123

- 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 59 consumers who received AT training from DVR's internal accessibility training unit, five DVR staff took training on various assistive technologies. In addition, WestAC 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.
- DVR identified a need for additional resources in this area and therefore allocated an additional FTE for assistive technology training.

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 For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Target for Federal FY ending 9/30/07	Actual through 6/30/07 for Federal FY
Number of people who apply for DVR services	7,340	7,621	5,716
Number of applicants determined eligible for DVR services	6,139	6,384	4,788
DVR's application acceptance rate	79.8%	81.3%	81.3%
Number of community educational events sponsored or attended by DVR	53	60	45

If DVR continues to receive the same number of applicants it has over the past nine months, it can expect to receive approximately 7,621 new applicants during Federal FY 2007. DVR expects to determine approximately 6,384 of those applicants eligible. This 1.5 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 2007, DVR will conduct open houses at local Field Offices. 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 2006. These were handed out at the open houses as well as in educational forums throughout the year.
- This March, the Colorado State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and DVR published the 2006 Annual Report, which covered the State Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2006 and summarized key accomplishments for State FY 2006. The Annual Report for FY 2007 will be published in early 2008.
- By the end of State FY 2006, DVR will have been visible at over 40 community educational events, providing information and education about vocational rehabilitation programs 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 For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Performance For State FY ending 6/30/2008	Performance For Federal FY ending 9/30/2007
Amount of state general fund dollars allocated to DVR.	\$4,990,045	\$5,044,182	n/a

In State Fiscal Year 2007, DVR's state funding was increased by \$1.8 million dollars, effectively restoring budget cuts resulting from the State's economic downturn in previous years. In addition, DVR continues to work with other state agencies, local governments and private entities to ensure adequate third-party dollars to be used as match. Consequently, the program is able to spend its entire federal allotment for Federal FY 2006 and 2007.

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

Indicator	Performance For State FY ending 6/30/2007	Target for Federal FY ending 9/30/07	Actual through 6/30/07 for Federal FY 07
Ratio of filled to vacant full time positions (average percent filled)	87.0%	96.1%	93.4%
Average amount of time it takes to fill a vacant position			
Percentage of all staff departures that are due to reasons other than retirement	6.45%	5%	2.1%

Average supervisory rating on the CDHS Supervisory Feedback Survey	No longer conducted by Dept.	No longer conducted by Dept.	No longer conducted by Dept.
Approximate number of training opportunities made available to staff	150	80	70
Number of training attendances by DVR staff	400	140*	80

**For Federal FY 2007 the State Training Conference (to be held in September 2007) will only include Administrative Professional staff and will not include all DVR staff, as was done in State FY 2006.*

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

- To better understand what our employee's value in their workplace and why they leave, DVR is using a new exit survey to collect feedback from every person who leaves. The feedback will be used to identify trends and target areas that will help DVR design and implement system-wide change to retain top talent in the future.
- DVR's Organizational and Staff Development Unit continues to provide regular training specifically to district and regional supervisors and additional management staff at least every 2 months. Topics target for current year include Effective Meeting Facilitation, Supported Employment, Self Employment, Successful Employee Retention (Love 'Em or Lose 'Em) and Understanding Workplace Biases. This Leadership series will continue through Federal FY 2007 and into 2008. By utilizing peer review leaders in the training, they valuable insight and perspective based on their hands on experience in the various topics covered by the training.
- 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 continues to conduct focus groups with staff from all of its offices to solicit feedback about the current state of DVR and ideas for improving the work environment. The feedback received was summarized and incorporated into an action plan completed during FY 2007.
- In June of 2007, DVR established an Employee Council that will meet every other month for the purpose of providing ideas, solutions, input and other constructive information to DVR management. The Council is made up of 17 DVR employees who are not supervisors or members of management. DVR's director is present and involved at all meetings to dialogue first hand with members and to directly hear offered feedback and solutions. At the first meeting, members established the following mission statement: "The DVR Employee Council strives to effect positive change for DVR by identifying and implementing resolution to agency dilemmas and creating an environment of empowered employees."

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

For Federal FY 2007, 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 Performance Levels	Colorado DVR FFY 2006 Performance
#1 Employment Outcomes	(1.1)	= or > previous performance period (> or = to 0)	+273
	(1.2)	55.8%	65.16%
	(1.3)	72.6%	92.49%
	(1.4)	62.4%	97.16%
	(1.5)	52.0%	51.62%
	(1.6)	53.0%	56.9%
#2 Equal Access to Services	(2.1)	80.0%	90.34%

Use of Title I Funds for FFY 2007 Innovation and Expansion Activities

Total expenditures of Title I funds for innovation and expansion activities for Federal FY 2006 (October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006) were as follows:

Support of the State Rehabilitation Council	\$ 16,770
Support of the State Independent Living Council	\$ 36,278

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.

The following is a chart comparing the Standards and Indictors data for the consumers in Supported Employment Programs compared to all DVR consumers, during the first eleven months of Federal FY 2007 (through the end of August 2007):

Standards	Indicators	Colorado DVR FFY 2006 Performance Supported Employment	Colorado DVR FFY 2007 Performance (All Consumers)
#1 Employment Outcomes	(1.1)	+99	+37
	(1.2)	66.2%	61.9%
	(1.3)	96.1%	91.2%
	(1.4)	100.0%	94.7%
	(1.5)	41.0%	51.6%
	(1.6)	37.0%	54.1%
#2 Equal Access to Services	(2.1)	97.7%	95.0%

As you can see, 100% of the consumers in Supported Employment Programs are individuals with significant disabilities, which is a large factor contributing to the lower results in Indicators 1.5 and 1.6. However, the other Indicators compare very favorably with the Indicators for all Colorado DVR consumers.

Although DVR has maintained a partnership with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) 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 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 are housed at local Community Centered Boards (CCB) and focus on promoting successful community employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities for CCBs and DVR. This pattern of services for DVR is being 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. In March 2007, DVR began providing vocational rehabilitation service information on approximately 125 individuals in Colorado who are participating in the WINS project.

Beginning in July 2007, DVR assumed management of the Disability Program Navigators, consisting of twenty positions located throughout the State who are housed in Workforce Centers (WFC). Their role is to act as facilitators to ensure collaboration and coordination between Workforce Center staff and DVR staff, and to increase the positive perception that people with disabilities are individuals that have abilities, who want to and can work, and can be and should be included in the trainings and other offerings available to all customers of the Workforce Centers. Specifically, they problem solve with Workforce Center staff and DVR staff regarding individual clients, act as expert resources for referrals to other community agencies and employers, offer limited service to clients waiting to get DVR services, and develop stronger networks among the WFCs, DVR and other community agencies.

ATTACHMENT 6.3

Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services

FY 2008

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, 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.