

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan for Fiscal Year 2013 (submitted FY 2012)

Preprint - Section 1: State Certifications

- 1.1 The **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [1] and its supplement under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act [2].
- 1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the **Department of Human Services** [3] agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan [4], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations [5], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.
- 1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation 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 Plan [6], the Rehabilitation Act and all applicable regulations [7], 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. Yes
- 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. Yes
- 1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement. Yes
- 1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law. Yes
- 1.7 The (enter title of state officer below)
Director Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Yes
- ... 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 (enter title of state officer below)...
Director Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Yes
- ... 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. Yes

State Plan Certified By

As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf>) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

Signed?	Yes
Name of Signatory	Nancy J. Smith
Title of Signatory	Director
Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)	06/28/2012

Assurances Certified By

At the request of RSA, the designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s), in addition to those contained within Section 2 through 8 below, in connection with the approval of the State Plan for FY 2013 No

Comments:

Signed?

Name of Signatory

Title of Signatory

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)

* The signatory of the assurance with the authority to execute and submit the State Plan will maintain a signed copy of the assurance(s) with the signed State Plan.

Section 1 Footnotes

[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, "Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[7] Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

Preprint - Section 2: Public Comment on State Plan Policies and Procedures

2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))

(a) Conduct of public meetings.

The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive 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 substantive amendments to the 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, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, 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 agency 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.

Preprint - Section 3: Submission of the State Plan and its Supplement

3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)

- (a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Rehabilitation Act.
- (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.
- (c) The state submits to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

3.2 Supported Employment State Plan supplement. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act 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.

Preprint - Section 4: Administration of the State Plan

4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))

(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 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. (Option A was not selected/Option B was selected)
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 unit that:
 - A. is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
 - B. has a full-time director;
 - C. has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; 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

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4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

- (a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission. (Option A was not selected/Option B was selected)

(b) The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17 and the designated state unit.

1. jointly with the State Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.29 and subsection 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 Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the council and the response of the designated state unit to the 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 CFR 361 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 Plan and its supplement; and
 - 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 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 Rehabilitation 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 Nonfederal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal 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.

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

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. No

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 Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within 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 Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. No

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.

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

This agency is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

- (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. nonfederal 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 purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in Attachment 4.7(b)(3) a waiver of the 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 nonfederal 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 may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

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

(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide work force investment system.

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide work force 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 work force 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 work force 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 nonprofit 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 postschool 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 Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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**
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 Rehabilitation 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.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 five 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 time lines 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 Rehabilitation 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 three 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 work force 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 Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act; and
 - E. strategies for assisting other components of the statewide work force 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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.

Preprint - 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 Rehabilitation 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 work force investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services. No

(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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act;
 - 3. referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide work force investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 work force investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

- (a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation 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, and 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 two 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act for that fiscal year.
- (b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit agencies and organizations.

- (b) Cooperative agreements with private nonprofit organizations.

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

Preprint - Section 6: Program Administration

Section 6: Program Administration

6.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act.

6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 nonprofit 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act.

6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 7: Financial Administration

7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))

- (a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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 Rehabilitation 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.

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 2013

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 more than twenty-five 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.”

The SRC committees include:

1. The Consumer Satisfaction Committee which addresses issues related to the access of DVR consumers to effective 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.
2. The Employment Committee which forges partnerships between businesses and vocational rehabilitation services to facilitate consumer transition into employment. The committee advocates for *Partners With Industry* projects within Colorado's business and industrial communities.
3. The Legislative Committee works to ensure that the SRC is updated in a timely fashion about all vocational rehabilitation and/or disability related legislation and budgetary issues. This committee monitors the Colorado State legislative and budgetary processes and educates the full SRC about relevant legislation or activities of interest.
4. The Membership/Recruitment Committee works to ensure that membership of the SRC is in compliance with the mandates of the 1998 Amendments of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 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, which summarize the advice and recommendations 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.

SRC has the following established goals for each committee:

Consumer Satisfaction Committee: The Consumer Satisfaction Committee will establish a consistent written process for referrals of students to DVR from every available school district to all DVR staff by March 1, 2011.

(Committee members report that collaborative partnership efforts resulted in the following work towards this goal.)

- A current list of DVR supervisors was provided to Transition Team Leaders. The list of supervisors and a list of DVR counselors will be updated each year in August and February and provided to Transition Team Leaders. We are researching possibilities of posting the list on the CDE website.
- The list of Transition Team Leaders for each district and any other specifically designated contacts will be updated at the beginning of school and provided to DVR Supervisors in September.
- A sample Working Agreement template is being refined and will be made available to education/DVR teams with support to develop local agreements that cover each school district in the State.
- A series of module trainings have been developed and will be provided for DVR counselors. Modules will be posted on the DVR intranet for future access. Module topics include: Transition 101, Legislation (related to transition); How to Read

School Records; Communicating with Youth; and SWAP 101. Cheryl Carver and Robin Baucknecht are the lead on these trainings. CDE team members will attend as available.

- To increase educators' awareness of DVR eligibility and service provisions, an information packet is being developed specifically for educators and will be disseminated at the Transition Leadership Institute in September. The link to the newly released DVR video will be included in the packet as well as being posted on the CDE website for access by educators and families.
- To assist in clarifying differences in services, a document showing side by side comparison of 504/ADA/IDEA will be revised and distributed.

Employment Committee: A minimum of five of the key members of the Colorado Legislature will be educated about the importance of fully funding DVR programs from an employment and employer perspective as measured by achievement of the goal of having five employers meeting with the key Legislators before the Long Bill is approved in 2011.

(Committee members report the following subset of goals and results towards these goals.)

- **Goal**: Continue working on federal employment issues for people with disabilities.
***Result**: The employment committee has worked with DVR to advance the opportunities for people with disabilities. The Schedule A hiring authority has been used for hiring in the federal sector.
- **Goal**: Connect with the City and County of Denver on human resources hiring of people with disabilities.
***Result**: After numerous attempts the Employment Committee has been unable to obtain a meeting with the City and County of Denver. We are still pursuing a meeting with human resources.
- **Goal**: Research issues and gather information on employment statistics from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

***Result:** The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, at the request of the Employment Committee, has established statistics that they are starting to report to the full State Rehabilitation Council quarterly.

- **Goal:** Research and gather information and discuss issues around employment for the blind.

***Result:** The Employment Committee has requested the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to report, along with other employment statistics, numbers on employment for the blind community.

The following are the Employment Committee's new goals for FY 2012-2013.

- Continue working on federal employment issues for people with disabilities.
- Connect with the City and County of Denver and other cities and counties in Colorado on human resources hiring of people with disabilities.
- Research issues and gather information on employment statistics from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation including employment information on the blind.
- Research issues and gather information on employment statistics from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation disaggregated by disability category.

Legislative Committee: The Legislative Committee will create a focused plan to educate key Legislators about the financial benefit to the state and to government that results from DVR's work. The plan will be implemented by the SRC by January, 2011.

(Committee members report the following subset of goals and their work towards these goals.)

- **Goal #1.** To have initial contact with representatives prior to beginning of legislative session to schedule meeting. There is no current progress to report, but members will continue to focus on accomplishing this task.
- **Goal #2.** A marketing plan targeting legislators using such tools as an elevator speech, public service announcements and social media. A flier has been updated and distributed to SRC. The social media is in the works.

- **Goal #3.** Invite legislators to attend SRC meetings. Members felt there was a greater likelihood of response if SRC waited until the end of the legislative sessions to send out invitations. One SRC member, Gavin Attwood, has some connections with different legislative members and is going to see who he can get.
- **Goal #4.** Committee updated their fact sheet. Members will create new fact sheet for the fall 2012 session and will begin to develop a progress report after the end of the current legislative sessions.
- **Goal #5.** Develop a one minute video to educate legislators that could be sent by email and posted on You Tube, Facebook or sent by email to the offices of the legislators. Members are exploring options to possibly partner with University of Denver or Colorado State University to complete this task, as well as looking into options for someone to write the script.

The Legislative Committee will start focusing on new goals for next year (FY 2013) in the upcoming meetings of Summer 2012.

Membership Committee: By March 2011, the Membership Committee will develop a continuous and sustainable plan for recruiting, recommending, and developing a pool of possible members for the SRC in accordance with federal and state executive order guidelines (RSA).

(Committee members report the following subset of goals and their work towards these goals.)

- The Membership Committee has worked with DVR's Business Outreach Specialists to educate them with firsthand knowledge of the Who, What and Where of the SRC, and the benefits of partnership by the employers that they support.
- Members discussed alternative scheduling as well as alternating business groups as contributors to the SRC.
- Meeting via Teleconference for employers outside of the Denver Metro area.
- Rotating business members to participate on scheduled projects.
- The SRC welcomed three new business members in 2012.

- The consistent focus remains on recruiting business members for SRC.

These committees will continue to work throughout 2012 to achieve their established goals and to set new goals.

The SRC committee also worked closely with DVR to discuss the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), developing appropriate questions to be included in the customer satisfaction survey and in examining the survey results. A discussion of the survey results, of common themes found across surveys, and of Colorado's C-stat reporting measures, resulted in the following formal SRC recommendations and strategies to DVR.

Although these goals are closely related to previous recommendations from SRC, discussions about the CSNA results and current C-stat measures support the need for these to be areas of on-going focus as they highly impact services to, and successful employment outcomes for, DVR consumers. In addition, progress had just begun being made on various strategies and tasks but had not been completed due to the unusually high turnover in DVR management staff this past year. SRC and DVR feel these goals are important and the work planned for them should continue. Following you will see the goals for the upcoming year and new state plan, as well as any progress already completed on them and any future activities planned for them.

Goal #1

Increase Rehabilitation Counselor Retention

Strategies:

a) Explore strategies for retaining DVR's recently hired staff

DVR has been examining options for incentives or pay adjustment for hard to fill locales/positions and areas with higher costs of living. The state of Colorado completed an Employee Engagement Survey and DVR is looking at these survey results to determine how the information can be useful as it pertains to DVR staff. In addition, DVR is creating its own Employee Engagement work group to identify why staff leave DVR, what might encourage them to stay, etc.

b) Explore use of exit surveys to better identify reasons for staff departures

Although DVR was not able to implement exit surveys last year, DVR has recently hired an HR liaison and one of the main functions of this position will be to conduct exit interviews of all staff departing DVR to look for trends, patterns and reasons for departures so that strategies can then be discussed to address any issues found.

c) Build better relationships between vendors and counselors

A vendor committee was formed in August 2011 with the purpose of looking at both DVR's Fee Schedule and all vendor issues that DVR faces. The goal is to be proactive, address concerns by staff and vendors, and improve the overall quality of vendors for DVR. Information obtained from the consumer surveys, staff surveys and vendors' surveys completed as part of this year's CSNA show that this goal is important to all parties involved within the DVR process in helping consumers reach their goals. DVR will continue to identify ways to build and foster relationships between vendors and counselors.

d) Decrease caseload sizes

This is a new goal in which DVR will examine ways to decrease caseload sizes or workloads to allow counselors to spend more one-on-one time with each consumer.

e) Assist counselors in reducing stress levels; ways to deal with stress

This is also a new goal in which DVR will explore different types of stress experienced and approaches to decrease stress to employees.

f) Utilize current list of universities with rehabilitation counseling programs to recruit and hire staff; add list of other accepted degrees that meet the minimum qualifications to the list and reach out to these schools as well

DVR's employee council created a list of all universities with rehabilitation counseling programs across the nation, including contact names and numbers. The contacts at these colleges have been provided with information on where students can find State of Colorado job postings and have been encouraged to share this information with their students. SRC has recommended that DVR explore the option of expanding this list to include other types of degree programs that meet Colorado DVR's minimum hiring qualifications, such as counseling majors.

DVR human resource liaison will engage in outreach efforts to effectively recruit and hire graduates of nationally core accredited universities.

Goal #2

Increase Consumer Engagement to Reduce Consumer Attrition as Evidenced by Increased Number of Implemented IPEs

Strategies:

a) Explore options to conduct a longitudinal study of why consumers “exit” programming

- Review customer satisfaction surveys from SRC perspective as well as examine results from CSNA customer satisfaction survey to focus in on this issue
- Continue to explore and implement use of motivational interviewing strategies; tracking how often these strategies are used and results of using these strategies
- Administer statewide skill development around the foundations of conducting strong intakes and keeping consumers engaged in the DVR process
- Improve education to consumers and referral sources about the DVR process and what it involves
- DVR will explore ways to use its quality assurance process to find effective ways to keep consumers engaged in the DVR process
- Continue to educate schools and students about DVR services and DVR process
- Inform prospective consumers of documentation required prior to intake
- DVR will explore the use of focus groups and key informant interviews in addition to traditional surveys to find out what does and does not keep consumers engaged

- As recommended last year, DVR is working with a national consultant to examine internal processes and improve approaches to handling barriers consumers may experience when navigating the DVR system

Goal #3

Increase Successful Employment Outcomes

Strategies:

- Review and capitalize on information received from a) CSNA survey to consumers actively seeking employment and b) CSNA survey to counselors with high production/high quality outcomes, sharing ideas and providing training on common themes found within these surveys
- Continue to be forward thinking to effectively identify current and future employment trends across Colorado to educate counselor and consumers about these trends
- As recommended by SRC last year, DVR will strengthen their Business Outreach Specialist program and utilize DVR's newly established Work Supports and Employer Engagement Unit to effectively increase employment outcomes statewide
- DVR has implemented a statewide core competency as a part of each staff member's performance plan targeted to increase employment outcomes for DVR participants.

DVR is in agreement with the areas of recommendation identified by the SRC and will strive to focus on making quality improvements in these areas. DVR looks forward to continuing to use the SRC members' expertise, skills and creativity as a valuable resource for achieving its goals and objectives, resulting in increase quality and quantity of successful employment outcomes for DVR consumers.

ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(1)

Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide
Workforce Investment System

FY 2013

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

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has cooperative relationships 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.

Mental Health Programs

DVR is currently implementing its statewide provision of services. 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 Behavioral Health and involves local level supported employment agreements with thirteen (13) Mental Health Centers and two (2) non-profit organizations throughout the State. DVR will 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) or Persons In Recovery. This program has resulted in increased integrated employment opportunities for these individuals.

Throughout the regions 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.

DVR staff meets with staff from various vocational 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 Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients with disabilities to reduce their dependency on public assistance through employment. Counselors and supervisors have increased efforts and activities with county social service agencies in working with recipients of TANF, who have disability related employment issues.

DVR works closely with TANF offices across the state to coordinate services. In addition, some staff serve on various TANF committees. A DVR counselor serves as a member of the TANF 60 Month Review Committee, which includes members from various agencies & disciplines who vote on individual's requests for extension of TANF benefits (beyond the 60 month lifetime allowed). This committee also works together to make recommendations for participants, such as referrals to DVR, to mental health services, and to other appropriate agencies.

The TANF 60 Month Review Committee can also mandate specific tasks (must attend 8 therapy sessions within “x” amount of time, must have the Med 9 form completed and signed, must participate in life skills activities, etc.) that recipients must complete in order to have continuation of TANF benefits). 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.

Educational Partners

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. On average, 140 of Colorado’s 178 school districts are currently involved in operating a SWAP partnership within the local communities that are established within those districts. On average, over 2,500 youth are served each year through SWAP. 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.

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.

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.

Currently, DVR has two counselors whose offices are co-located on site at the local CCB site. In the other areas of the state, DVR counselors and supervisors meet frequently with Community Centered Board staff to coordinate service delivery. 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 addition, the Coordinator of Supported Employment for DVR meets regularly with the vocational specialists at the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to discuss issues impacting services.

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". DVR staff attend board and committee meetings to facilitate an effective working relationship between our agencies. DVR, the CCBs and the Division of Developmental Disabilities have completed a pilot project in which they collaboratively increased and improved 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, staff work 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.

Outreach to Employers

Outreach to employers is an important focus of service delivery in Colorado. Various DVR staff members are part of their local business association meetings, such as Connect North, Alameda Gateway and Jewell/Wadsworth Area Business Association. 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 we offer. Also, DVR has a federal employment specialist who is actively involved in linking federal job openings with DVR-involved job seekers. This specialist also works to develop new federal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

DVR now has newly formed unit, The Work Supports and Employer Engagement unit, which will coordinate the activities of fifteen Business 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 continues to coordinate closely with the Workforce Centers to provide additional job placement services to consumers.

Colorado AgrAbility

The Colorado AgrAbility Project promotes success in agriculture for people with disabilities or other physical challenges and their families. Colorado AgrAbility is part of a nationwide network of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs begun through the 1990 Farm Bill. Colorado AgrAbility works in collaboration with Colorado State University and Goodwill Industries of Denver. The goal of the National AgrAbility Project is to inform, educate, and assist farmers, ranchers, farm workers, and their families with disabilities, so they can continue to have successful careers in agriculture.

Colorado AgrAbility can help by a) assessing agricultural work sites and tasks, b) recommending farm equipment adaptation, home modifications, and adaptive equipment, c) referring families to local service providers, and d) providing informational and educational winter workshops from the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension for farmers, ranchers and family members with disabilities and the professionals who work with them.

BUSINESS OUTREACH

DVR has 15 Business Outreach positions stationed throughout Colorado. Over the past two years, these staff members have received training on employer needs-based strategies for job development/placement. DVR also holds a license from Employment Management Professionals (EMP) to deliver training to community partners. Three areas of the state have delivered the licensed material to youth service and supported employment providers.

Strengthening of processes to include selection and implementation of an employer data collection method and coding for job ready status are now underway as part of DVR's Job Placement Steering Committee. This group is reviewing internal and external job placement service delivery methods and defining staff roles and responsibilities to improve job matches resulting in employment outcomes.

Federal Business Outreach Specialist (BOS)

In April 2010, Colorado DVR hired its first Federal Business Outreach Specialist (BOS) to focus exclusively on developing federal employment opportunities for DVR participants. His work has entailed training for external and internal staff, recruitment assistance for federal agencies, and retention services for current federal employees with disabilities.

Since the beginning of state fiscal year 2011, DVR's Federal Business Outreach initiative has resulted in over 40 Disability Awareness Training sessions with federal agencies throughout the state. In addition, federal employment training has been administered to the majority of DVR offices throughout Colorado, and to VR professionals throughout Region 8 via webinar. DVR's Federal BOS also traveled to North Dakota in May 2011 to administer a two-day federal employment training session for North Dakota DVR staff.

The overall strategy for job development with federal agencies is to bypass the competitive hiring process by utilizing the federal government's non-competitive Schedule A hiring authority for individuals with disabilities. Instead of posting open positions publicly, many agencies in Colorado are first turning to Colorado DVR and other organizations that work with people with disabilities for recruitment assistance. This strategy contributed to an 86% increase in

successful employment outcomes for DVR participants with federal employers in Colorado from state fiscal year 2010 to state fiscal year 2011.

The US Department of Labor recently proposed a new rule that would require federal contractors and subcontractors to set a hiring goal of having 7 percent of their workforces be people with disabilities, among other requirements. In a proactive response to the proposed rule change, Colorado DVR is partnering with the US Department of Labor, Office of Federal Contracts Compliance Programs (OFCCP), to offer a Veterans and People with Disabilities Recruitment Symposium in Aurora, CO on June 19, 2012. The event will include presentations from the OFCCP, Colorado DVR, and other community organizations that represent veterans and people with disabilities. The final hour of the event will be a job fair that will give the employers in attendance an opportunity to meet with job seekers who are veterans and people with disabilities.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Program Initiatives

Screening and Identification Protocol for TBI:

The TBI Program is partnering with the general DVR program to develop and pilot a screening and identification protocol for traumatic brain injury. The Director of the TBI Program is facilitating a work group comprised of representatives from each of the DVR regions.

The scope of this work group includes the following tasks:

- 1) Evaluate the effectiveness of a web-based training to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation counselors to ensure that counselors have a foundational knowledge of brain injury.
- 2) Review the Ohio State University TBI identification screening tool to ensure it works within DVR's intake process.
- 3) Develop an assessment matrix in partnership with neuropsychologist/psychologist in the field.
- 4) Develop an evaluation criteria and a method/protocol for data collection and data review.

- 5) Evaluate the effectiveness of the protocol and develop recommendations regarding either implementing this protocol statewide or not.

Once the work group has the training and protocol in place it will be piloted in the Boulder/Longmont and the Colorado Springs offices for one year. We are hoping to kick off the pilot in August 2012. During that period we will be evaluating if this protocol is effective and determining if this is something we would like to roll out statewide.

Employment Series:

The TBI Trust Fund Program is partnering with the following agencies to provide education on what to consider when thinking about returning to employment following a brain injury. The TBI Program is partnering with; the Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado, Cerebral Palsy of Colorado benefits planners, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Independent Living Centers across the state to conduct these workshops titled "It's All About Employment; Returning to Work After Brian Injury. The target audience is individuals with brain injury interested in employment.

Participants of the workshop gain insight into how their brain injury may effect how they return to work. They also learn about vocational and benefit resources available to help them return to work. To date we have conducted 6 workshops and covered the following regions of the state:

- Colorado Springs- Nov. 2010
- Craig – June 2011
- Grand Junction- June 2011
- Alamosa- August 2011
- Denver-March 2012
- Fort Collins- May 2012

Partnership with the Colorado Department of Education:

The TBI Trust Fund Program has a partnership with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to provide training to increase skills and knowledge of the systems and people that serve children with brain injury.

Brain Injury Education and Health Consultants:

In partnership with the TBI Trust Fund, the CDE employs Brain Injury Education and Brain Injury Health Consultants. The goals of these Consultants are to:

- Develop a network of school based brain injury teams
- Develop a method for identification, assessment and intervention for children with brain injury
- Implement a hospital to school transition protocol (including emergency departments)
- Provide coordination, training and technical assistance for the Regional Brain Injury Liaisons

Regional Brain Injury Liaisons:

The TBI Trust Fund partners with County Health Departments and School District personnel to provide region based training and systems development support. Regional Liaisons are located across the state of Colorado. They are public health professionals, school psychologists, school nurses, teachers, and school based occupational therapists etc. The goal is to increase the understanding of the unique needs/gaps in each region of the state and to address these needs/gaps on a regional level to ensure all children in Colorado with brain injury have their needs met. The goals of the Regional Brain Injury Liaisons are to:

- Identify training needs in their region
- Build capacity of the region through training and consultation
- Facilitate transition from hospital and emergency departments to school/community
- Develop a safety net for children with brain injury

Potential Future Initiatives within DVR:

- 1) The TBI Program would like to work with DVR General Program to provide cross training for the TBI Trust Fund Care Coordinators and DVR staff so that each can be a more effective partner and support to the other as they serve adults with brain injury.
- 2) The TBI Program is beginning conversations with the Manager of the Program and Program Development Unit to possibly develop a statewide brain injury resource team. This team would be comprised of DVR field staff from each region of the state. They would either currently possess or be provided with specific training in brain injury. This team would act as a resource to all DVR counselors in terms of how to most effectively provide assessment, planning and support for DVR participants with brain injury.
- 3) The TBI Program, along with DVR counselors, are beginning discussions with the Coordinator of Supported Employment, the IL Program Coordinator and the manager of the Work Supports and Employer Engagement regarding needed long term supports (supported employment) for participants with brain injury.

Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH has grown from one original program site at Cincinnati Children's to over 200 across 40 states and four countries. In August 2012, a new Project SEARCH site will open with the Department of the Interior (DOI) at the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood, CO. Seven bureaus will be hosting Project SEARCH students during the 2012-2013 school year, including Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Business Center, Office of Natural Resources Revenue, US Geological Survey and National Park Service.

Project SEARCH at the Denver Federal Center is a collaboration with the following community partners:

- Department of the Interior
- Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Jefferson County Schools
- Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC)
- The Arc of Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties

Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG)

DVR has worked extensively as a sub-contractor under the Medicaid department on the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. The employment infrastructure building resources of the MIG have opened up numerous opportunities for grant activities focused on individuals with disabilities, service providers and employers.

DVR has been a significant resource for information and program planning for the new Medicaid Buy-In Program for Working Adults with Disabilities. The program rolled out March 1, 2012, and enrollment has exceeded expectations each month.

The MIG is sponsoring or directly developing resources focused on youth and adults with disabilities aiming to change perceptions related to employment and employment supports. The following represent a number of the projects:

Individuals with Disabilities

A calendar featuring work incentives information such as SSA employment supports (Impairment-Related Work Expense, Plan for Achieving Self Support, Expedited Reinstatement, etc.) and other programs such as Earned Income Tax Credit was mass-produced and distributed to individuals through DVR offices, community-based organizations, etc.

MIG staff members are creating a web resource specifically designed for youth with disabilities featuring state and national level resources on topics such as: education, preparing for work, finding employment, securing health insurance, transportation, etc. Underway is a video vignette series featuring youth who access fixed route transportation systems, such as door-to-door and "Para-Transit" models.

Service Providers

The MIG has prioritized work incentives training for service providers (including DVR staff) in an attempt to create strengthened capacity for reliable, encouraging information for individuals considering work. The grant has sponsored staff from over 30 community-based providers to obtain in-depth training and many audiences have received general information

overviews resulting in “Tier 1” and “Tier 2” levels of expertise. The MIG also sponsored DVR staff education on work incentives through the 2012 statewide conference.

The MIG staff is working to expand the service delivery capacity of Employment Networks (ENs) through piloting an off-the-shelf “Ticket-to-Work” case management tool, sponsoring training through the National Employment Network Association, and assisting DVR staff to understand the benefits of SSA’s Partnership Plus model.

Employers

Through MIG resources, DVR has held disability awareness training (DAT) events for businesses throughout Colorado. The events have featured information from the national campaign, “Think Beyond the Label”. DVR has also had opportunity to interface with human resource organizations at conferences and other association events.

Several vignettes have been developed for use with employers which highlight successfully working individuals with disabilities. The vignettes, posted on You Tube and available for use in DAT training, feature topics such as accommodations, hidden disabilities, etc.

The MIG and Youth

The MIG, through stakeholder-driven employment initiatives, is working to address the needs of youth with disabilities. The planned webpage for youth has been remarkably expanded and will be more of a full web resource with multiple categories and subcategories. Content is now in a final stage, and once web design is complete, the MIG will market the resource through school district staff, parent centers, etc.

The MIG is specifically addressing the transportation options of youth through a creative project with Very Special Arts of Colorado. Several youth with disabilities will be photographed through their commute to work or other activities and these photos will be converted to video vignettes for illustrating the power of fixed route systems of employment.

BOND (Benefit Offset National Demonstration) Project

DVR is in the second year of a seven-year partnership with Abt Associates and Cerebral Palsy of Colorado implementing the Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND) project throughout Colorado and Wyoming. Funded by the Social Security Administration (SSA), BOND is operating in ten different locations across the United States. Using a rigorous study design the intent of the BOND Project is to explore and evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of service levels and work incentives that, when offered to Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) beneficiaries, result in the beneficiaries obtaining and maintaining successful employment outcomes.

Within the BOND Project, DVR provides to work incentive counseling, service coordination, and information and referral services, to SSDI beneficiaries who are referred and randomly selected. DVR also assures that these beneficiaries who return to work receive financial incentives not available to other SSDI beneficiaries. DVR's participation in this Project will enable DVR to be on the cutting edge of new approaches and strategies for service delivery that are intended to improve the effectiveness of services provided to SSDI beneficiaries supporting a return to work and a better quality of life for the beneficiaries.

ADA NETWORK

DVR is a strong partner with the recently renewed Rocky Mountain ADA Center based out of Colorado Springs. This organization provides technical assistance and information to a six state region. Ten DVR staff members are a part of the center's ADA Network. These staff members, primarily DVR Business Outreach Specialists, receive advanced training on the ADA and the Amendments Act and are available for training upon request. The Rocky Mountain ADA Center is committed to on-going training and collaboration holding bi-monthly network calls, annual national training sponsorships, and regular educational opportunities.

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's young consumers. It is anticipated that braiding of funds will continue in the future to support ongoing activities and possibly expansion of this effort. Similar opportunities have been created such as the collaborative relationship with Sunny Acres, a senior community, which provides adjustment and training opportunities in housekeeping, grounds maintenance, kitchen and dining work, clerical and personal care.
- In Fort Collins, DVR staff meets regularly with the Veterans Administration to create employment opportunities for disabled veterans. In addition, each staff member is assigned as a liaison to work closely with a major agency such as the local workforce center boards, local mental health agencies, local school districts, etc.
- 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. In the past these have included:
 - the United Cerebral Palsy Association, which has two Projects with Industry Grants
 - the Colorado Deaf/Blind Network
 - the Deafness-developmental Disability Workgroup
 - Shalom
 - Platte River Industries, and
 - the Brain Injury Association of Colorado.

DVR continues to keep an eye on innovative grant opportunities to help participants reach successful employment outcomes. DVR is currently exploring possibilities such as The PROMIS Grant and The ADD Grant.

- DVR also has relationships with:
 - the Division for Developmental Disabilities
 - local Community Centered Boards
 - the School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP)

- the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC)
- The Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council, etc.
- DVR also works closely with the following agencies:
 - National Federation for the Blind
 - Cerebral Palsy of Colorado
 - Craig Hospital
 - 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.
- DVR counselors working with the deaf and hard of hearing work closely with:
 - The Colorado Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - the deaf program at the Independent Living Center in Colorado Springs
 - Domestic Violence Ended (DOVE)
 - the Mental Health Center of Denver's deaf program
 - Marion Downs
 - the Assistive Technology Program
 - Light House
 - Helen Keller Institute
 - Mid America Regional Interpreter Education Center

- Local high schools deaf programs, transition teams and special education staff, and others.
- In addition, counselors for the deaf and hard of hearing also work closely with the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind's Bridges to Life program. This is a transition program that teaches teens to live independently, how to make friends and "date" appropriately, how to budget, and much more. This program also partners with the Department of Education, DVR and Pikes Peak Community College to assist the teens in taking introductory courses that meet their needs.
- 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.

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.

ATTACHMENT 4.8 (b)(2)

Coordination with Education Officials

FY 2013

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. DVR has organized a Youth Services and Transition Unit within Administration falling under the leadership of the Deputy Director of Field Services. This Unit is responsible for assuring the quality provision of vocational rehabilitation to Colorado's youth with disabilities.

DVR continues to monitor and assure implementation of the state-level agreement between DVR and CDE. This agreement promote 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 key tenets of this agreement have been developed into a desktop guide, which is updated regularly entitled, the "CDE/DVR Cooperative Services Handbook for Youth in Transition." Thousands of these handbooks are distributed annually to youth, parents, educations, VR counselors and community-based agency providers.

Each year, we strive to include DVR and Education staff in ongoing activities which promote a seamless transition for youth exiting out of education into the adult world of employment. As we move forward into the upcoming federal fiscal year, training will be made available trough a variety of modalities depending upon the identified needs of local partners. Within the current fiscal year, both DVR and CDE had the opportunity to participate in teleconference, intranet and in person training to address the need for foundational information pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of our partnership. Additionally, a series of transition modules are being presented to all DVR Counselors to ensure a working knowledge of the law, transition 101, working with youth and how to read school records. These transition modules will become part of the new staff orientation and be made available later next year on DVR's intranet for staff to access. Endeavors to cross train staff will continue to aid in greater awareness and understanding of service delivery and how each partner's efforts can compliment one another for better student outcomes. DVR works in conjunction with CDE to align training allowing us to model in the field our expectations for collaboration. This approach to cross training advances local procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities. For example, DVR continues to participate in annual regional cadre meetings facilitated by CDE to reinforce the continuum and linkages to adult services.

DVR plays an integral role in annual institutes facilitated by CDE for local education teams to elevate awareness and expand our presence within education. The purpose of the institutes is to improve the quality of services in the area of secondary special education and transition services at the local level through knowledge, capacity building, dissemination and outreach with over site from the National Secondary Transition /Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC). Efforts focus on improving indicator outcomes resulting in effective transition practices for youth with disabilities both at the state and local levels. DVR commits content experts, technical assistance to local teams and counselors to aid in linkages.

Together with CDE, DVR takes an active role in state youth groups/committees promoting ongoing collaboration between community agencies in the provision of comprehensive transition services. Our ongoing participation in such groups promotes better coordination of services and shared resources at both the state and local levels. It enables us to participate in the development of processes, procedures, guidelines and practices for more effective transitioning planning and services. As described below, we will continue to partner with those groups which are of value.

During the past three years, DVR has furthered their involvement with the Advisory committee on Homeless Youth (ACHY). DVR actively elevates awareness to the issue of homelessness which impacts young adults with disabilities adversely affecting their ability to access services and ultimately become contributors to the success of Colorado's workforce. At the state level DVR has a presence on the Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth (ACHY") and support working, local relationships between DVR counselors, School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) providers and the educational liaison for this population. Annually, we endorse the Homeless and Runaway Youth Awareness Month in November by supporting local events state wide, promoting the Green Light Project, collecting essential hygiene products so youth can be job ready. DVR will continue to maintain an active role in promoting access to vocational rehabilitation services for youth with disabilities who are homeless by participating at the state level in ACHY and disseminating information to local DVR offices and partners.

Individuals ages 15-19 are one of the highest at risk for traumatic brain injury (TBI) and when acquired, these youth and their families struggle with unexpected challenges including how to navigate adult service systems. Collaborating with the TBI Trust Fund has provided a means to help families and medical service providers to understand both education and adult employment systems ultimately better preparing youth to identify and receive the support they need to secure employment. DVR and education partnered to present at the 2011 National TBI Conference in Denver where training was provided to families, service providers and medical professionals designed to lessen the gap between education and employment for youth with TBI. These efforts will continue to expand at the state level through future training by requests such as the Tri-County Health Center and the Latino Chamber of Commerce.

In 2008, the Colorado General assembly created the Colorado Autism Commission in order to obtain additional information on people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in the State, which DVR was invited to participate. The Commission was tasked with identifying existing services and the gaps in these services as experienced by the ASD community and to determine appropriate actions to remedy these shortcomings through the preparation of a Ten Year Strategic plan. Efforts on the Autism Commission are

being further explored through Ad-Hoc groups. DVR continues to participate by representing adult services in the Ad-Hoc group which promotes education to family members, service providers and other professionals about issues which impact the life of younger individuals with ASD existing from the K-12 education system into the adult world, including employment. This year efforts were explored and will continue to identify effective ways to prepare family members for the transition and how we can be effective at helping them understand adult service options.

The Mental Health Advisory Council recognizes the growing need of youth with mental health disabilities exiting the school system and preparing to enter employment as a population needing expanded efforts. DVR and our CDE counterparts contribute time and support to the subcommittee Under 26 Transition Work Group that along with representatives from other stakeholders combined their efforts to provide a four-part interactive webinar series this fiscal year to address what works for youth in transition ages 14 - 25.

Colorado was awarded a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) in 2010, which will expire in 2012. One purpose of the MIG is to support the implementation of Colorado's Medicaid Buy-In Program (MBI) for working adults (ages 16 – 64) with disabilities. The MBI will impact the transition of youth from post secondary as well as those exiting out of high school and entering the work force, once implemented making it important for DVR to promote information about MIG to youth and their families to ensure they are informed of their choices as it pertains to work and benefits. Other efforts linked to the MIG include expanding DVR's website to include a page for transitioning youth on those resources which commonly impact employment decisions, and to serve as a resource bank for related education staff unable to leave their classrooms to identify community linkages which they must make for existing youth. Working within our agency, this webpage is anticipated to be available for the upcoming school year (2012-2013) and will be maintained by the Youth Services and Transition Unit.

DVR has a designated position that is responsible to establish and build working relationships with federal agencies in order to learn about their hiring needs and promote filling those vacancies with qualified people with disabilities. This position, the Federal Business Outreach Specialist, works closely with the field to make available information pertaining to openings which are youth specific. This year, through the Federal Business Outreach Specialist's contacts preparations were explored and will be implemented in the new fiscal year for DVR's first Project SEARCH site with the Department of Reclamation. Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique, business led, one year school –to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration and hands-on training through worksite rotations. This program will open new opportunities for youth who require more supported employment for those youth diagnosed with chronic mental illness, autism spectrum disorder and developmental disabilities. As this newly formed partnership is beginning, DVR's Youth Services and Transition Unit will remain involved as they explore the possibilities of expanding the project state wide.

In collaboration with Hands On Education Services, Inc., DVR's Federal Business Outreach Specialist explored and brought to Colorado this unique program and partnership with Hyatt. Hands On Education is for those individuals who are too high

functioning for intensive supportive employment, but may not qualify for a traditional training program due to their disability related impediments. The program is ideal for anyone who requires or would benefit from a short-term training program making it an excellent training alternative for many youth existing high school special education programs. Colorado's efforts to build upon this working relationship for career entry outcomes for our youth will continue.

DVR has maintained an average of forty School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) sites. These forty sites involve approximately 150 of Colorado's 178 school districts. SWAP services over 2,500 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 moving into next year with thirty-eight sites and over 140 school districts.

DVR continues to maintain memberships on the Colorado State Youth Council (SYC), which is a subcommittee of the Colorado Workforce Development Board. One goal of the SYC 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 into adulthood. Submissions are scored against the National Center on Workforce and Disability's (NCSD) 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 every other 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. The benefits of providing work based learning for youth is evident as youth identify career interest, skills and abilities, learn about work place expectations and job requirements which improve post school outcomes. As a result, additional work experience opportunities for youth are being explored around the state by partnering with local employers, workforce centers, education and DVR. Currently, we have several ongoing hand-on paid work experiences in employment settings such as hospitals, nursing homes and gardening centers. DVR anticipates continuation of this type of collaboration.

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.

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, counselors attend job and resource fairs, back-to-school nights, and parent-teacher conference nights. They present information about DVR at residential treatment centers, residential childcare facilities and at teacher in-service events. DVR plans to continue these types of outreach, education and consultation activities with our school partners for the purpose of providing consultation and technical assistance to assist them as they plan the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school services, including vocational rehabilitation. DVR developed and annually updates an outreach and presentation toolkit for DVR counselors who are working with school districts, youth and parents. In the upcoming fiscal year, education and DVR will take steps to insure there is an effective and consistent referral process in place for all youth between our agencies at the local level. In collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), the Youth Services and Transition Unit are working to design a working agreement template for DVR Supervisors to use when partnering with their area districts/BOCES. This working agreement will define responsibilities of DVR and of education in providing transition services to minimize duplication, to ensure access to services for youth and to support ongoing and effective working relationships. As part of this endeavor, due to staff turn over, local contact information for an identified DVR and district liaison will be made available and kept current on the state websites for easy access.

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.

The DVR Youth Services and Transition Unit will continue to be available as a resource for the State Independent Living Council (SILC) and any work they may do in the upcoming year to provide and increase transition services to youth. Ongoing involvement in this initiative, and the role that DVR could play, will continue to be explored.

This fiscal year, DVR attempted to take advantage of the opportunity to design and implement statewide model demonstration projects through partnerships in employment that stimulate and advance system change in order to expand competitive employment in integrated settings for youth and young adults with developmental disabilities and intellectual disabilities by applying for the Administration of Developmental Disabilities Employment Systems Change Grant (ADD Grant). Although we were not among the recipients to be awarded the ADD Grant, DVR and its partners were not deterred and began looking for other funding opportunities to aid in meeting the needs of young people with disabilities enter and succeed in competitive, integrated employment. As we enter into the new fiscal year, partners are once again coming together to explore the PROMISE grant, an interagency effort to improve outcomes for children, and the families of children, receiving Supplemental security Income (SSI) benefits. The request for application for PROMISE is due out later next year.

DVR and Education have entered into an interagency agreement to help guide the provision of transition services in Colorado, which has been done at the state level. This agreement defines the responsibilities of VR and of education in providing transition services to minimize duplication, to ensure access to services for youth and to support ongoing and effective working relationships. The agreement also generated the development of the Cooperative Services Handbook for Youth in Transition, a supplemental to the interagency agreement. Both the agreement and handbook help partners to identify roles and responsibilities understand each system's financial responsibilities and discuss the provision for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsibilities for transition services. This information is reinforced through ongoing training with partners from both education and DVR.

To see agreement and handbook, go to
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/CoopSvcsHndbk_YouthTrans.pdf

ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(3)

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Organizations

FY 2013

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

DVR currently has few formal cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

DVR does administer two programs mandated by Title VII of the Act:

- the Colorado Independent Living Core Services (CILCS) program and
- the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) program.

Both programs are currently run out of Colorado's statewide network of nine Centers for Independent Living (Centers), which provide services to individuals with significant disabilities who face barriers to living self-directed lives in their communities.

Under the CILCS program, Centers provide independent living skills training, individual and systems advocacy, peer counseling, assistance with social security applications, transportation, housing and many other services that support consumers to set and achieve their goals of living independently in their community. This diverse and extensive list of service types allows Centers to provide the holistic support that many consumers with significant disabilities may need.

The OIB program serves people who are 55 and older who are blind or have impairments to their vision. Consumers tend to be people who are experiencing vision loss from age-related factors and who are concerned about losing independence, either in their home or in their community. The OIB program helps consumers learn new skills and identify community resources that will support their participation in full, independent lives. The OIB program is funded through an RFP process to eligible vendors across the State in a three year grant cycle

In addition, DVR has a Traumatic Brain Injury program which has agreements with two non-profit agencies. The first is with Brain Injury Alliance of Colorado to complete intakes and eligibilities for the TBI program. The second is with Denver Options who

serve as Care Coordinators for adults with brain injury, serving approximately 700 individuals annually statewide.

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. DVR also works cooperatively with CP of Colorado with the Community Work Incentive Coordinators.

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, and
- 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. Approval then goes to DVR's staff authorized to sign provider agreements under contract waiver H1115. 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 and certify that:

- Purchases of services and goods maximize the efficient and effective use of public funds, and
- Services and goods will only be purchased from qualified providers, and
- 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 2013

Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

The 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 Behavioral Health (DBH) 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.

DVR maintains a formal statewide intra-agency agreement with Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). This agreement identifies plans for the provision of supported employment services for individuals with mental illness and considered to have a most significant disability. The agreement provides for collaboration in the provision of supported employment services, identifies specific services to be provided, provisions for training and technical assistance, responsibilities of each agency, standards of performance, and methods to evaluate performance. The agreement is reviewed annually and amended when appropriate.

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

DVR and DDD continue to work in collaboration to effectively plan and coordinate provision of supported employment services to individuals with the most significant developmental disabilities by the DDD community services agencies 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.

Within this collaborative relationship, DVR is responsible for the provision of supported employment services, including, but not limited to, job coaching. 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 typically used by the rehabilitation counselor to provide such training and other supported employment services.

The DDD community service provider must be registered with DVR to be able to provide supported employment services to DVR consumers. Services are purchased 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 DDD supported employment service providers.

Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Human Services

Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) have maintained a formal intra-agency 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 centers, private agencies, and rehabilitation offices to eliminate duplication of services and maximize available resources. It also contains provisions for purchase of supported employment services, including transitional employment services. Such services are only purchased from vendors approved by both DBH and DVR, such as mental health centers, and 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. Service providers must be registered with DVR to provide supported employment services under the DVR/DBH cooperative agreement.

Improvements have been realized in interagency planning, training, information sharing, and resolving mutual programmatic and procedural concerns. There has been ongoing cooperation at the State level between DVR and DBH. 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, identifying qualified individuals to provide extended support, 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 completion of intensive supported employment services authorized under Titles I and VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Due to recommendations by RSA in their last site visit beginning July 1, 2012, there will be 15 Mental Health Supported Employment Programs around the state to provide services to participants eligible for supported employment. The new process involves billing for services for individual eligible participants according to their needs. There are incentives for achieving successful outcomes. For participants living in areas where there is not an available program, DVR will utilize vendors for the time limited services and the Mental Health Centers have agreed to provide extended services.

ATTACHMENT 4.10

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

FY 2013

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 three 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 spreadsheet is maintained internally within DVR by the Human Resource Specialist. It contains information on offices and regions to which staff are assigned, functional job titles, and other information about the position. Finally, DVR's new electronic case management system, CO-AWARE, also contains staff information about positions to which employees are assigned. DVR uses a combination of these three data systems as well as supervisory records to continuously gather and analyze information about the qualifications of the 259 full time positions assigned to DVR staff.

Currently, 126.5 of the 259 positions are vocational rehabilitation counseling positions. The remaining 132.5 full time positions consist of 45.5 administrative assistants; 9 program assistants; 3 office managers; and 20 district and regional supervisors; 14 Business Outreach Specialists; 12 rehabilitation teachers and orientation and mobility instructors; 7 Business Enterprise staff and 20 central office administrative staff, 1 Assistive Technology Coordinator and 1 Assistive Technology Specialist.

DVR has determined that it needs all of the 259 appropriated Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions to effectively achieve its mission. At the current point in time, DVR has the following vacancies: 11 rehabilitation counseling positions; 4 administrative assistant positions, 1 Business Outreach Specialist position, and one central office administrative staff position.

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 95 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 rate of attrition of DVR staff averages about 10-12%, or approximately 25-30 staff per year. However, during the last fiscal year, four of DVR's top management personnel (the administrator of field services and all three regional supervisors) retired. In addition, DVR leadership determined that a fourth regional supervisor should be added to the management team in order to better serve Colorado's consumers and the district structure that exists across a geographically diverse state. These five management positions have since been filled, all with existing DVR staff, mostly from the district supervisory ranks as well as from one other management position. This, in turn, created a situation where DVR's highest quality rehabilitation counselors competed for and have been promoted to fill those supervisory positions, consequently leaving those rehabilitation counselor positions open.

Given this unique situation as well as the more traditional personnel changes, it is projected that DVR will need to recruit approximately 50 new rehabilitation counselors during the next three years. In addition, DVR anticipates the need to continue to recruit high quality support staff; approximately 15 during the next three years given the average attrition rate for the agency.

Personnel Standards

Colorado does not have state-approved or state-recognized certification, licensing or registration requirements for many of the personnel classifications used by DVR, specifically rehabilitation counselors. In collaboration with Colorado's Department of Personnel and Administration, DVR has worked this year to clarify and refine the established minimum qualifications, ensuring that they are consistent with the highest entry-level academic degree (Master's) needed for national level certification.

One of the levels at which rehabilitation counselors can be recruited is the Rehabilitation Intern level. The minimum qualifications for this classification requires a Master's degree but allows for a substitution of a Bachelor's degree combined with a specific duration of work experience in the field of serving individuals with disabilities. Once an individual is hired into this position, he or she is given a total of five years after employment to complete the necessary coursework or accrue the necessary employment experience to meet the minimum qualifications of a rehabilitation counselor I position. 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.

Minimum Counselor Qualifications

REHABILITATION COUNSELOR I:

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from a program fully accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE)

OR: Possession of a current Commission on Rehabilitation Counseling Certification credential (CRCC)

OR: Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Master's degree in Counseling, Psychology, Special Education, Social Work, Behavioral Science, Disability Studies or closely related human services field AND two (2) years of experience working directly with individuals who have disabilities providing services appropriate to the work assignment.

REHABILITATION COUNSELOR INTERN:

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, Human Services, or closely related human services field.

Substitution: Bachelor's Degree in a Human Services related field plus 2 (two) years of experience working directly with individuals who have disabilities.

Condition of Employment: Agreement to complete additional educational and work requirements within 5 years of becoming a certified state employee.

DVR established expectations that all staff fully meet CSPD requirements through implementation of a CSPD tuition assistance policy in March of 2000 for those individuals who needed additional training in order to meet the established qualifications. The policy required staff who did not meet the standard to develop and implement individual education plans. These plans were phased in over several years, in order to spread out the costs and minimize the loss of productivity. The policy remains in effect currently and DVR provides full tuition assistance as well as purchasing of required books for those needing to take additional coursework.

When necessary, 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, recruitment of individuals who fully meet the minimum qualifications of Rehabilitation Counselor I is not feasible or successful.

For vocational rehabilitation counselors who will be serving large numbers of consumers who are deaf, the hiring process includes an additional screening to evaluate their skills in American Sign Language communications. Orientation and mobility instructors and rehabilitation teachers

also must meet the minimum qualifications established and outlined above as their technical classification within the Department's personnel system is Rehabilitation Counselor.

Current Status of Qualified Personnel

DVR first established policy to require all DVR rehabilitation counselors to meet minimum qualifications in 2000. At that time, DVR established a target 5 year period by which all existing rehabilitation counselors would meet the requirement. Since attaining that target, DVR has maintained the established minimum qualifications for newly hired staff in collaboration with the Department's Division of Human Resources.

In the rare instances when DVR has had to hire an individual at the Rehabilitation Counselor Intern level, those individuals have been given five years after their training/probationary year to fully meet the qualifications for a Rehabilitation Counselor I position.

Of the 113.5 individuals currently in filled rehabilitation counselor positions within DVR (there are currently 11 vacant rehabilitation counseling positions), 2 individuals are currently categorized as rehabilitation interns and are working on completing their masters degrees and are enrolled in CORE accredited programs. In addition, DVR currently has two rehabilitation counselors with CSPD plans to specialize in vision rehabilitation therapy and orientation and mobility.

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 to clearly meet the minimum qualifications for a Rehabilitation Counselor I position. Faculty at UNC indicates that there are approximately 24 individuals currently enrolled in their graduate level Rehabilitation Counseling programs and 6 who graduated with Master's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling in May, 2011. UNC reports they currently have eight new students starting their program in the Fall of 2012.

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, University of Wisconsin Stout and Hunter College. All of these programs offer distance education programs and 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 for those whose disabilities limit their mobility.

The Division also works to coordinate with several other institutions of higher education across Colorado that offer Master's level degrees in counseling and counseling-related areas. Individuals obtaining this level of degree, when combined with the appropriate acceptable work experience, meet the minimum qualifications as well. One example of this includes Adams State University 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. Adams State location in the San Luis Valley, an area of the state with a high representation of individuals of Hispanic background, helps to increase the availability of individuals with minority backgrounds.

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. Additionally, during the past six months, DVR's Employee Council members have been instrumental in establishing a list of appropriate training institutions and their associated contact details and reaching out to these institutions in a structured manner to specifically recruit for Rehabilitation Counselor positions.

DVR believes that the private sector is another good resource for recruiting experienced, competent staff. Through its relationships with various professional associations for counseling and 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.

DVR believes strongly in being able to provide quality services to everyone who applies for vocational rehabilitation services. Consequently, DVR strives to meet the communication needs of all participants. Following is a graph comparing the current ethnic population distribution as reported by the United States (U.S.), State of Colorado, and DVR participants.

Communication with Diverse Populations

Race	U.S. Statistics	Colorado Statistics	DVR Statistics
One race	97.3%	96.6%	79.6%
White	74.2%	83.3%	73.8%
Black	12.6%	3.9%	6.7%
American Indian or Alaskan	0.8%	1.0%	2.4%
Asian	1.8%	2.6%	1.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Other	4.8%	5.6%	-
Two or more	2.7%	3.4%	20.4%
Hispanic or Latino	16.4%	20.8%	15.7%

Data obtained from American Community Survey 2010 Data and from DVR 911 reports

This data indicates that compared to the American Community Survey 2010 data, Colorado DVR is currently serving

- 72% more black/African Americans than the average population of Black/African Americans reported as living in Colorado
- 140% more American Indian or Alaskans than the average population of American Indian or Alaskans reported as living in Colorado
- 200% more Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander participants than the average population of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander reported as living in Colorado

At the present time, at least 30% of DVR's field offices have one or more staff members who speak fluent Spanish. All offices in the areas with a high Hispanic population 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. DVR also

have staff members who speak a variety of other languages, such as German, Afrikaans, Swahili, Flemish, Dutch, Greek and Polish.

In addition, all offices have access to translation resources. DVR is located in an office within the Department's organizational structure that also includes the Division of Refugee Services and is working in close collaboration with that Division to capitalize on the knowledge, expertise and resources available to provide the best possible rehabilitation services to common consumers.

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. Offices without staff members who can interpret have local agreements with these organizations and individuals to provide interpreting services.

Approximately 10 students are currently enrolled in the Interpreter Preparation Program at Front Range Community College in Westminster Colorado which is in the northern part of Colorado. In addition, 8 students graduated from the Sign Language Interpreter Preparation Program at Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado Springs in May 2012, which serves the more southern areas of Colorado. Regis University in Denver, Colorado is just beginning to offer a Bachelor's of Applied Science degree with a Community Interpreting Specialization as well. This is expected to sufficiently address future interpreter needs.

Every DVR office in the State has access to a telephone relay service available through Colorado's local telephone provider and those offices that serve a high number of individuals who are deaf are equipped with video relay equipment.

The capacity to provide materials in Braille is available through equipment located in the Colorado Springs and Denver Metro Offices. 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 electronically, 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, State plan hearings, any 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 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 I & II) program. The Department's Staff Development unit also continues to conduct an internal leadership program 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 and DVR will continue recruitment efforts accordingly.

Colorado DVR had an unprecedented turnover in management staff this past year and has worked hard to fill these positions with current staff. DVR is reestablishing its strong leadership roles which can be seen by the training offered to staff who have filled these vacancies. The four staff promoted to Regional supervisors are currently attending the Emerging Leaders

training in Washington, with two of these staff trainings supported by TACE. In addition, Region 8 TACE has worked closely within their region to develop VR specific trainings, such as the Supervisor series, which Colorado's five new regional supervisors are participating in.

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 TACE 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 TACE program also maintains a library of materials, which are available for loan. As a result of staff feedback, DVR will be offering up additional case management training, foundational policy training, disability specific training, and will look at revitalizing the use and effectiveness of motivational interviewing techniques.

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. DVR is also utilizing various modalities such as videoconferencing and

webinars to reduce cost and increase participation in order to provide more efficient ways of training.

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 2013 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 have also been provided copies of the new counselor training modules developed by the Region VIII TACE. In-Service Training funds are used to provide continuing education for staff, with a special priority for rehabilitation technology needs and communications skills.

State Rehabilitation Council

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

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (a)

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

FY 2013

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

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) 2012

As required by CFR 361.29, every three years, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), in conjunction with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), conducts a comprehensive statewide needs assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the vocational rehabilitation needs of:

- 1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including the need for supported employment services;
- 2) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation;
- 3) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system as identified by those individuals and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of this year's assessment conducted in the spring of 2012.

In order to identify the needs of the above mentioned, it was decided that it would be important to obtain information from as many sources possible, including DVR participants, DVR staff members, stakeholders, community partners, DVR vendors and the general public. The surveys focused on gathering information about individuals' experiences with DVR, including what was working well for them and where they experienced barriers to effective relationships and service delivery.

Consequently, the following eight surveys were completed:

1. General Survey posted on DVR's website
2. General Consumer Satisfaction Survey
3. Consumers Seeking Employment Survey
4. All DVR Staff Survey
5. High Production/High Quality Counselors' Survey
6. School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) Survey
7. General Vendor Survey
8. Placement Vendor Survey

Data collection included a multi-method approach with surveys provided in paper and electronic formats, as well as other alternative methods. Each survey was distributed in the manner in which it was thought would capture the most feedback from each particular source. Following is a table of all surveys sent.

Survey	Date sent	Date closed	# sent out by mail	# sent out by email	# provide d to DVR offices	# response s	% Return rate
SWAP	3/7/2012	3/23/2012	0	90	0	65	72.20 %
All DVR staff	3/8/2012	3/28/2012	0	243	0	140	57.60 %
High production/ high quality counselors	3/8/2012	3/28/2012	0	37	0	25	67.50 %

Survey	Date sent	Date closed	# sent out by mail	# sent out by email	# provided to DVR offices	# responses	% Return rate
General Website	3/8/2012	3/30/2012	25 SRC	138	50 per office	119	
Consumers looking for work	3/12/2012	3/30/2012	543	477	0	104	10.19 %
General Consumer Satisfaction	3/21/2012	4/6/2012	1000	5214	0	891	14.30 %
Placement vendors	3/12/2012	3/30/2012	620	216	0	37	4.40%
All vendors	3/12/2012	3/30/2012	0	3674	0	390	10.62 %

The information from the surveys was analyzed and presented to DVR's State Rehabilitation Council and the Rehabilitation Leadership Team, who in turn provided, discussed and strategized the application of the feedback with all Regional and District supervisors within DVR. The results were ultimately shared with all DVR staff. In addition, survey results were then shared with Dr. Scott Sabella, TACE Region 8 Center Director and Mr. Robert Jahner, TACE 8 Technical Assistance Advisor, who also provided input and feedback.

Examination of the survey responses indicated multiple areas that all parties' surveyed (participants, vendors, family members, stakeholders and community partners, DVR staff, etc.) saw as concerns, leading to some common themes across all surveys.

Common themes across surveys:

- Hire more staff/decrease caseload size,
- Increase consumer motivation/responsibility towards employment search
- Need for timelier movement through the process
- Need for increased communication/follow up
- Improve use of comprehensive assessment process to reach strong employment goal
- Increase education of and outreach to employers

Examination of responses also highlighted to DVR current issues participants are facing in which they need additional assistance or resources. The emerging needs for participants are identified as follows:

Emerging needs of consumers:

- Overcoming the barrier of finding employment in an economic downturn
- Job placement/development services assistance
- Education and training
- Opportunities for persons with disabilities to accumulate work experience
- Employer and public education about the ability of persons with disabilities
- Overcoming health and functional limitation barriers such as work tolerance, stamina, etc.
- Transportation
- Client skills development
- Counseling/therapy services
- Benefits assistance, understanding of benefits, and access to or referral to benefits planner
- Providers, lack of providers or provider support
- Motivation of consumers, readiness for work

In addition, survey responses also highlighted areas of need for the DVR agency. Concerns were indicated in the following areas as topics that DVR needs to look at internally in order to improve services provided to its participants and are indicated as:

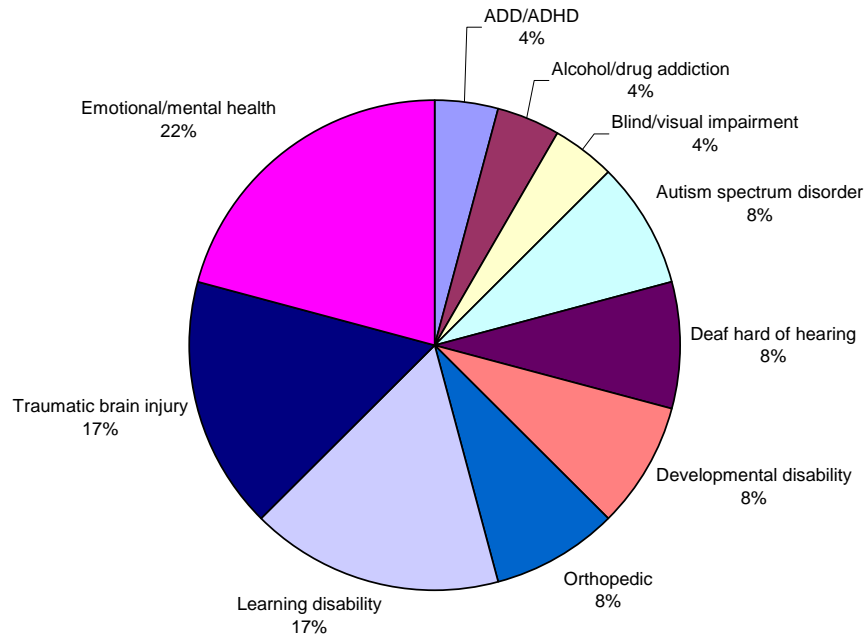
Emerging needs for the agency:

- Timeliness
- Communication with clients, client contact
- Customer service
- Improvement in partner collaboration
- Streamlining of vocational rehabilitation process
- caseload/work sizes

Several questions were asked in more than one survey in attempt to get perspective from all parties who interact with DVR. Following are eight graphs that indicate overall results from these questions across all surveys. (Responses from individual surveys are seen later in the report.)

One question asked of participants or those persons working closely with participants, such as family members, counselors and service providers was what the participant's primary disability was. Answers to this question were as follows:

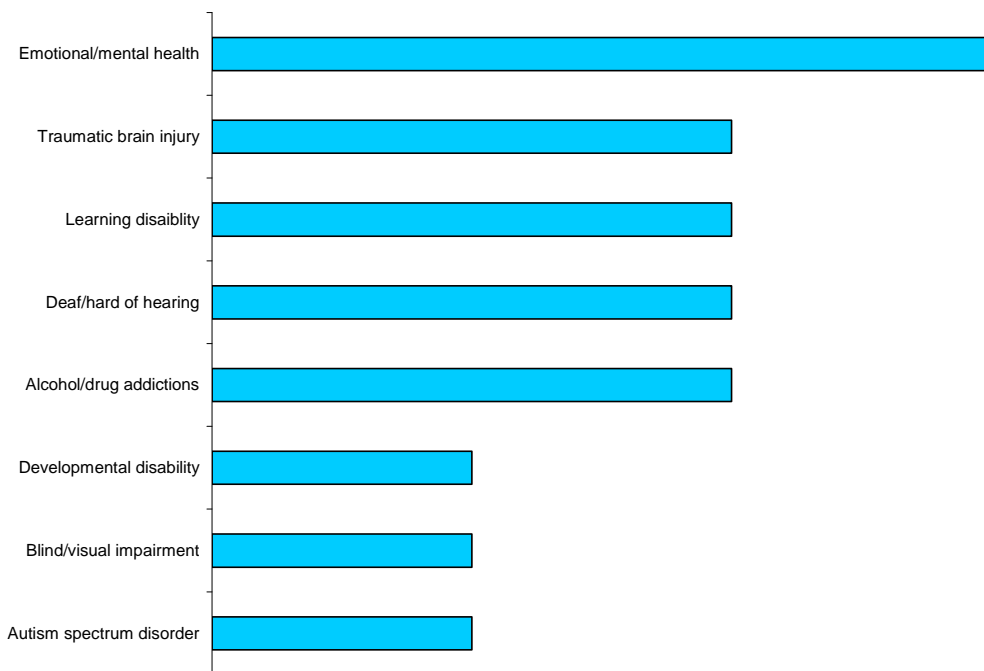
Consumer's primary disability



This information shows what areas the people DVR serves feel is their main disabling condition.

DVR also asked in various surveys which disability respondents felt makes it most difficult to get and keep a job, with the results as follows:

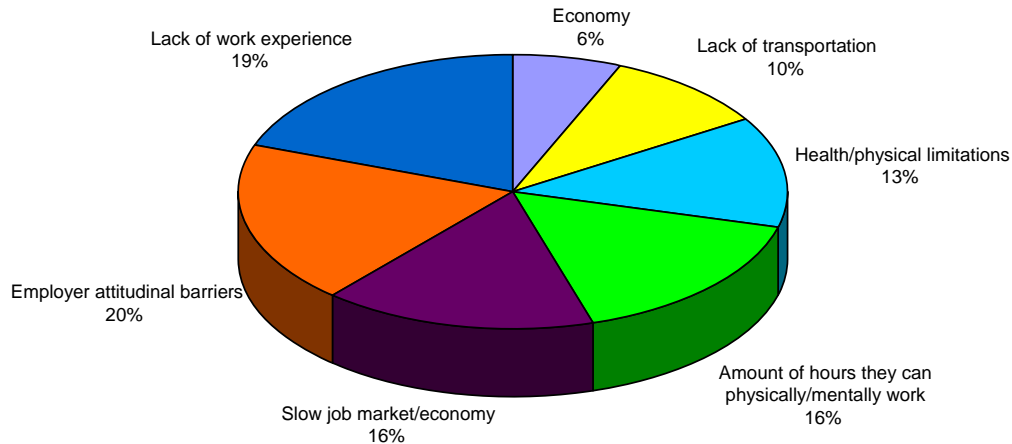
Disability that makes it most difficult to get/keep a job



This question was asked to determine which areas people see as biggest areas of concern, in order to then determine which disabilities staff may need to be more educated about when discussing employment goals and barriers to employment with consumers, as well as speaking about accommodations with consumers and/or employers.

In order to address issues facing our consumers when looking for work, several surveys asked respondents to indicate out of a list of ten to seventeen factors, what they thought the five top barriers were to people with disabilities in getting and keeping a job. Following are the overall seven highest answers indicated from respondents across all surveys:

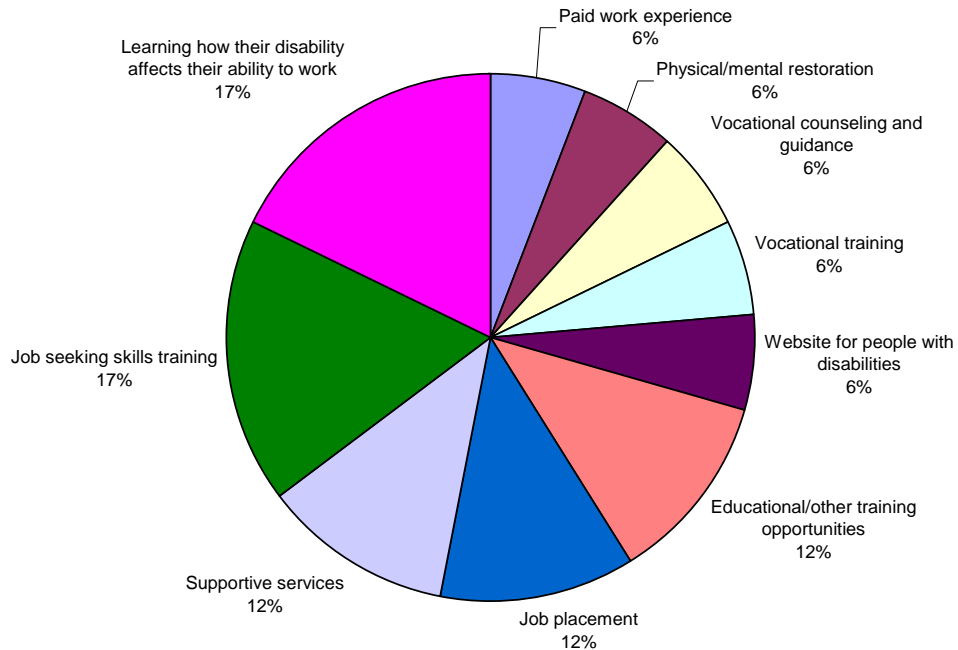
Top Five Barriers to Employment



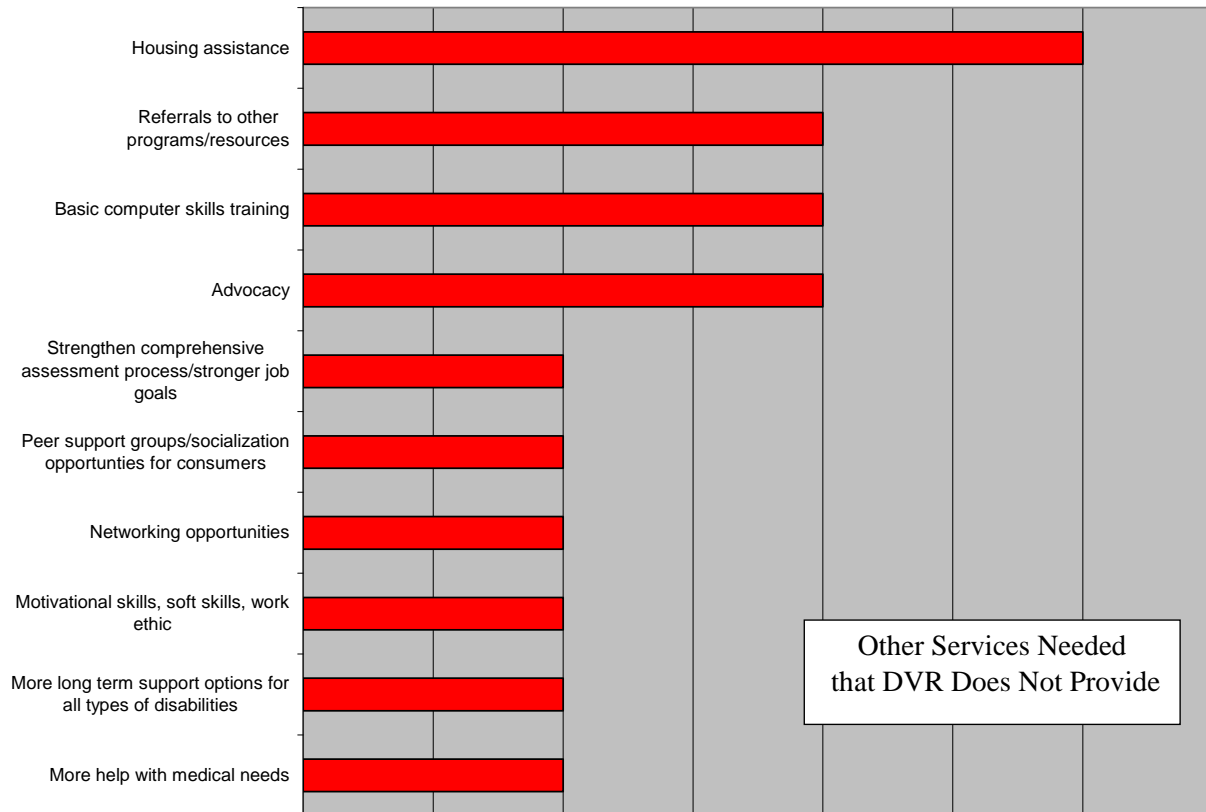
This information assists DVR with planning in regards to areas counselors may need to pay closer attention to when developing plans with participants. It will be important to be thorough in asking questions with each individual to address all areas of concern to ensure increased potential for successful employment outcomes.

To ensure thoroughness in provision of DVR services, a question was asked of respondents about what other services they felt consumers could benefit from. Response choices included services DVR can pay for as well as various referral services, other services and an option to write in answers. The top ten responses were:

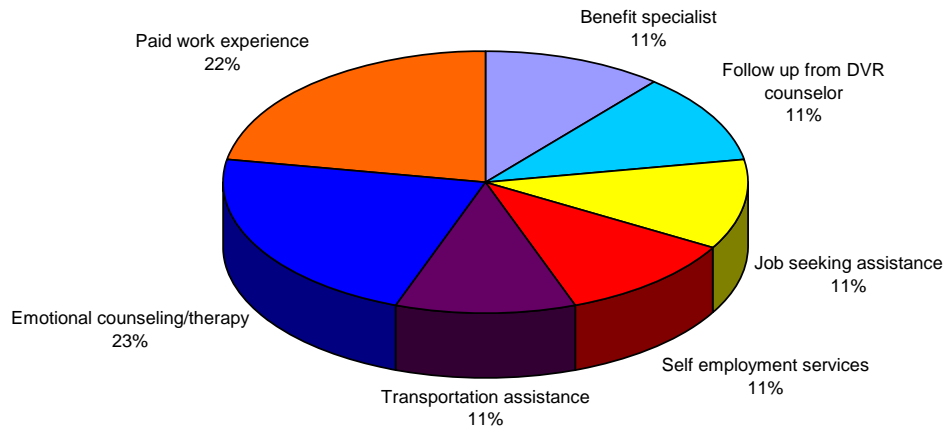
Other Services Consumers Could Benefit From



A similar question asked was targeted at trying to find out if those surveyed felt there are additional services that persons with disabilities need to become successfully employed that DVR does not currently provide but would be beneficial. Responses were interesting in that numerous responses that were written in were actually services that DVR does currently provide or that are available, leading DVR to conclude that further education of available services is needed.

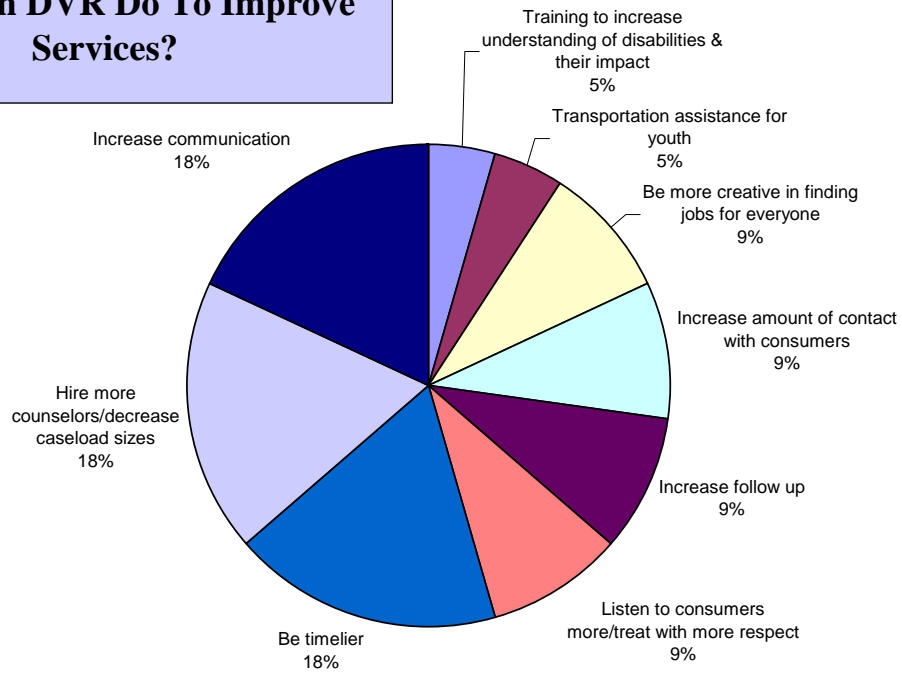


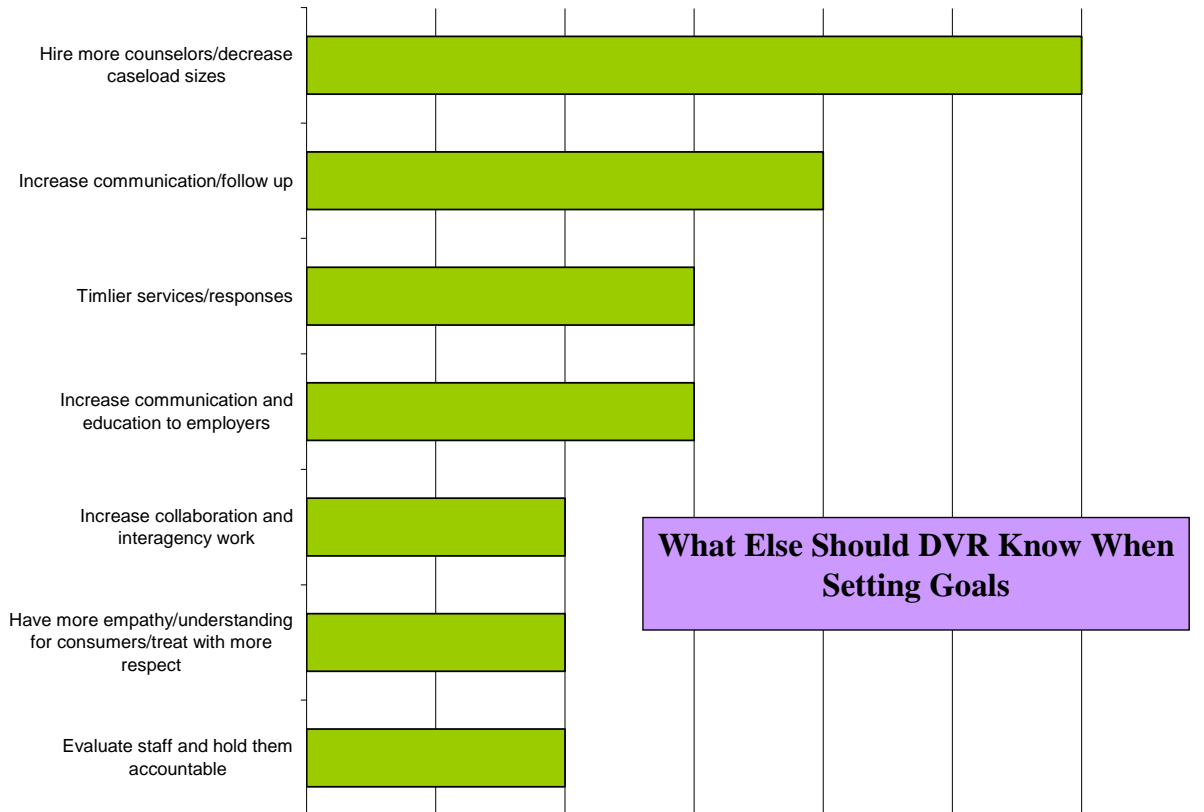
Services Respondents Thought DVR Didn't Provide, But Does



Two of the final questions asked across all surveys were aimed at finding out what more DVR could do to improve their services and what else DVR should know or consider when setting future goals.

What Can DVR Do To Improve Services?





Although information gleaned from all surveys was used when determining the State’s Goals and Priorities, close attention was given to these common themes found across surveys as this is information that was consistently provided by all types of persons that interact with DVR and consequently was deemed as high priority.

Next is a summary of each survey, how each survey was distributed, the number of surveys sent, the number of responses to each survey and the response rate.

1. General Website Survey

This survey was posted on DVR's website so it would be available to anyone for completion (participants, family members, stakeholders, vendors, staff, community partners, etc.) An email was sent to 163 partners and stakeholders with the link to complete the survey. In addition, postcards were printed and put in all DVR offices across the state so visitors to these offices would also have an opportunity to provide feedback. The hope with this survey was to obtain feedback from as many types of people that interact with DVR as possible (consumers, parents/family members, providers, stakeholders, employers, etc.) about what is working well within Colorado DVR, what areas need attention, what areas there may be gaps in, and to find out if there were emerging issues that needed attention. The survey was open for completion for three weeks and 119 people completed it.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. Please indicate your role with or relationship to DVR.

Community Centered Board	21.8%
Consumer receiving DVR services	15.1%
Advocacy organization	14.3%
Workforce center staff	10.1%
Other	10.1%
Independent living center	8.4%
Mental health center	6.7%
Parent/family member of consumer receiving services	6.7%
Vendor	5.0%
Health organization	1.7%
Educational institution	0.0%

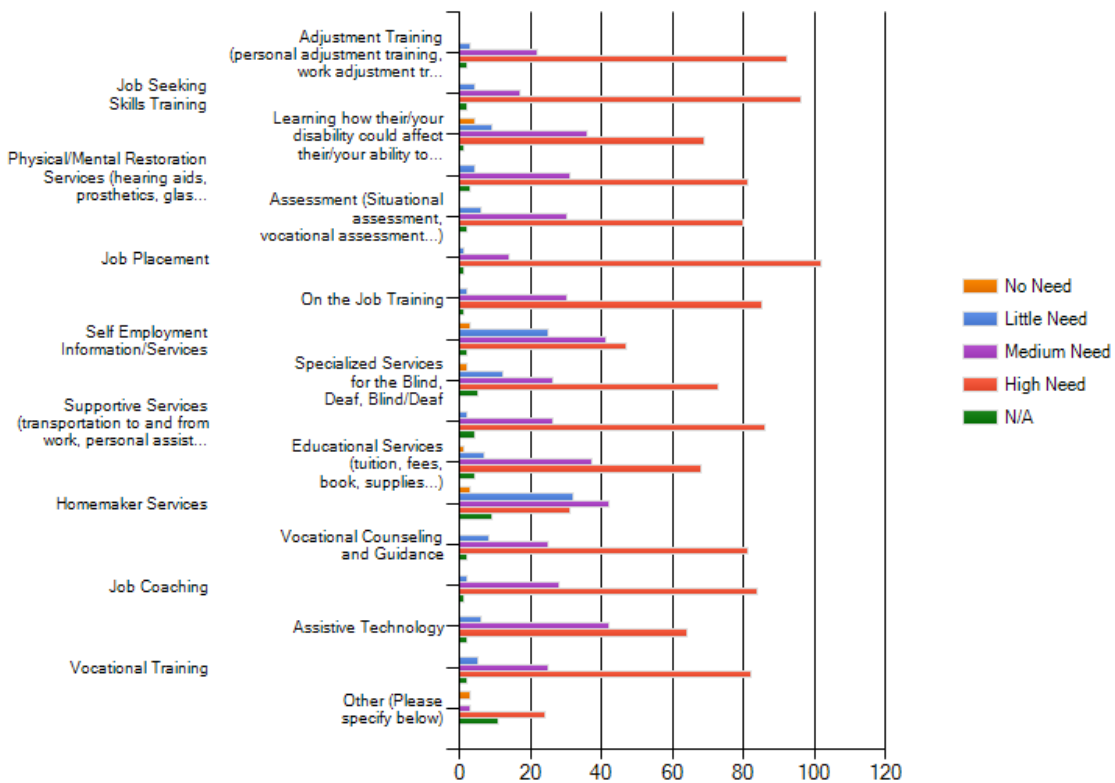
Note: "Other" responses included Adult Protective Services, SRC member, Human Services staff, etc)

2. What is your knowledge/understanding of who DVR is and what we do?

1. Agency that provides necessary services to help people with disabilities return to work
2. Help people find and keep a job
3. Provide school and or other training
4. Help people live independently
5. Help remove barriers/provide supports to employment
6. Help people with disabilities find a job goal that fits their disability

3. Please rate how much you think individuals with disabilities need the following services(s) in order to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently.

Please rate how much you think individuals with disabilities need the following service(s) in order to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently.



3. (Continued) Please rate how much you think individuals with disabilities need the following services(s) in order to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently.

1. Job placement	High Need	86.4%
2. Job seeking skills training	High Need	80.7%
3. Adjustment training	High Need	77.3%
4. Job coaching	High Need	73.0%
5. Supportive services	High Need	72.9%
6. On the job training (OJT)	High Need	72.0%
7. Vocational training	High Need	71.9%
8. Vocational counseling and guidance	High Need	69.8%
9. Physical/mental restoration	High Need	68.1%
10. Assessment (situational and vocational assessment)	High Need	67.8%
11. Specialized services for the Blind, Deaf, Blind/Deaf	High Need	61.9%
12. Other	High Need	58.5%
13. Educational or other training opportunities	High Need	58.1%
14. Learning how their disability affects their ability to work	High Need	58.0%
15. Assistive technology	High Need	56.1%
16. Self employment information/services	High Need	39.8%
17. Homemaker services	Medium Need	35.9%

NOTE: "Other" responses included job carving, financial assistance, independent living services, personal care, benefit counseling, etc)

4. Are there other services that are not listed above that you feel would be helpful to people with disability when they are trying to get or keep a job and/or live independently.

No	46.2%
Yes	37.8%
N/A	16.0%

5. If you answered yes to the above question, please describe what other services may be helpful to people with disabilities when they are trying to get or keep a job and/or live independently.

1. Benefit specialist
2. Advocacy and advocacy training
3. More contact with client; be more proactive in outreaching/contacting client rather than waiting on them to contact you
4. Ongoing counseling/therapy for consumers throughout DVR process
5. Peer support groups and socialization opportunities for consumers
6. Increase services/opportunities in rural areas (job opportunities, services, etc)
7. Better comprehensive assessment and help finding job goal that is a good fit for consumers situations
8. Help with organizational, social, problems solving skills

6. Please indicate the top five barriers that you feel prevent or hinder persons with disabilities in getting and keeping a job and/or living independently.

Employer attitudinal barriers/discrimination	69.0%
Lack of transportation	52.2%
Amount of hours one can physically work	43.4%
Slow job market/economy	43.4%
Lack of work experience	42.5%
Disability benefits	40.7%
Lack of long term supports	37.2%
Lack of available vocational rehabilitation services	35.4%
Health/physical limitations	30.1%
Lack of qualified service providers	23.9%
Criminal records/convictions	22.1%
Lack of adequate medical care/insurance	15.9%
Lack of adequate/stable housing	13.3%
Other	11.5%
Language/cultural barriers	9.7%
Lack of family support	5.3%
Lack of child care	4.4%
TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)	0.0%

7. Please indicate your reaction to the following statements. (Answers below indicate highest category of response.)

DVR services help people with disabilities achieve their goals	Agree	51.3%
DVR services help improve employment options for persons with disabilities and help them get to work	Agree	49.1%
DVR explains its program in a way people can understand it	Agree	47.3%
DVR helps people with disabilities have better job choices than before they worked with DVR	Agree	45.5%
DVR encourages consumer choice and involvement in choice of job goal, services needed and providers	Agree	44.6%
DVR staff treat people with respect and courtesy.	Agree	44.2%
DVR staff understand disability issues and the concerns of people with disabilities trying to get and keep a job	Agree	41.6%
DVR listens and answers questions/concerns	Agree	40.5%
DVR services prepare people for the kind of job they want	Agree	38.9%
DVR staff are timely with their communication and return phone calls/contact within 48 hours	Agree	33.0%
If I had complaints or concerns about DVR services, I was satisfied with how DVR responded	Agree	22.5%
DVR provides services to help consumers reach their goals in a timely manner	Disagree	32.4%

8. Have DVR services met your expectations?

No	47.8%
Yes	38.9%
N/A	13.3%

9. If DVR services have not met your expectations, what could DVR have done differently?

1. Be timelier at all stages of the process
2. Improved communication (be proactive and reach out to consumers instead of waiting for them to contact you)
3. Listen more to consumers
4. Work more closely with consumers and help them more (paperwork, forms, job search)
5. Have a more respectful and caring attitude
6. More options for persons with developmental disabilities
7. Have a wider variety of job opportunities/be more creative in helping find jobs
8. Explain services to consumers better; list of services available for consumers

10. Overall, how would you rate the quality of services DVR provides?

Good	34.9%
Poor	25.7%
Fair	19.3%
Excellent	18.3%
N/A	1.8%

11. What is DVR doing well?

1. Meeting individual needs
2. Employ compassionate, well trained, professional staff
3. Good, collaborative working relationships with partners
4. Not much
5. Helping consumers to find and/or keep a job
6. Providing education and training opportunities
7. They are persistent and keep trying
8. Respond well
9. Good service provision

12. What could DVR do differently to improve the services we provide?

1. Be more responsive, timelier and communicate more effectively
2. Training to increase understanding of disabilities and their impact on individuals
3. Decrease caseload sizes/hire more staff to allow more one-on-one time with consumers
4. Listen more to consumers
5. Be more creative in finding jobs for everyone
6. Increase DVR funding
7. Explain/list all services available for consumers
8. Increase or provide more educational or other training opportunities for more consumers
9. Hire more vendors and pay them more

13. Please tell us anything else you think we should know for setting future goals and priorities for improving DVR services.

1. Hire more staff/decrease caseload size to allow more one-on-one time with consumers
2. Improve follow through and communication
3. Be timelier throughout the process
4. Increase collaboration and interagency work
5. Be more patient, respectful and understanding
6. Hold staff accountable
7. Ask for client input more
8. Provide more employment opportunities and more creative employment opportunities (hire business professionals to do outreach)
9. Educate and outreach to the community about DVR services

2. General Consumer Satisfaction Survey

This survey was sent to a) all consumers with email addresses in our system (5,214) and b) to a random sample of 1,000 consumers via their mailing/home addresses for a total of 6,214 surveys sent. The purpose of the general consumer satisfaction survey was to target consumers with open cases with DVR to ask how DVR is doing, to find out what is working well, what areas we could make improvements in, and if there were services that were not being provided that were needed. DVR planned to use the information obtained in setting goals and priorities for the upcoming years to improve the services we provide. The survey was open for completion for two weeks and there were 891 responses for a response rate of 14.3%.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. What is your primary disability?

Deaf/hard of hearing	22.6%
Emotional/mental health	13.5%
Orthopedic	10.2%
Blind/visual impairment	7.4%
Traumatic brain injury	7.1%
Learning disability	5.5%
Neurological	5.5%

2. Please indicate other disabilities you also have that make it difficult to obtain/maintain employment.

No other disabilities	39.7%
Other (consumers listed multiple disabilities)	20.0%
Emotional/mental health	17.6%
Learning disability	9.1 %
Deaf/hard of hearing	9.0%
Blind/visual impairment	6.1%

3. How old are you?

46-65	53.0%
22-45	38.8%
Younger than 21	4.3%
Older than 65	3.9%

4. Please indicate your race/ethnic background.

White	82.2%
Hispanic/Latino	10.1%
African American or Black	6.7%
American Indian or Alaskan native	3.5%
Other	2.9%
Asian	1.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1%

5. What is your gender?

Female	51.3%
Male	48.7%

6. What is your level of education?

Some college, voc or trade school (no cert or degree)	32.5%
Bachelor's Degree	20.9%
High School Diploma/GED	16.8%
Associate's Degree	14.5%
Master's Degree	6.8%
Other	6.4%
Less than a high school diploma	2.0%

7. Did you ever receive Special Education services while in school?

No	71.2%
Yes	28.8%

8. Where is your DVR office located?

Denver Metro	24.6%
Colorado Springs	9.8%
Fort Collins	8.8%
Aurora	7.6%
Golden	5.7%
Northglenn	5.5%
Boulder	5.1%
Greeley	4.2%
Greenwood Village	3.9%
Grand Junction	3.3%
Other	3.3%
Longmont	3.0%
Glenwood Springs	2.0%
Frisco	1.3%
Alamosa	1.2%
Durango	1.1%
Montrose	0.9%
Edwards	0.8%
Craig	0.6%
Lamar	0.4%
Sterling	0.4%
Rocky Ford	0.1%
Limon	0.0%

9. Please indicate your employment status.

Not currently working/worked in past	58.8%
Working 31-40 hours/week	10.4%
Working 11-20 hours/week	9.1%
Working more than 40 hours/week	7.2%
Working 0-10 hours/week	6.5%
Working 21-30 hours/week	4.2%
Never employed	3.8%

10. How did you first hear about DVR?

Other	23.6%
Friend/family member	19.2%
Doctor/health care provider	18.5%
Counselor/therapist	17.1%
School Staff	8.6%
Employer/employment agency	5.3%
Internet	3.7%
Brochure	1.6%
Drug/alcohol Counselor	1.1%
Magazine/newspaper/other advertising	0.2%

("Other" responses included Social Security, Workforce Center, Social Services, Attorney)

11. Why did you apply for DVR services?

I wanted to	59.4%
Someone else thought it would be good for me to do so	40.6%

12. When you applied for DVR services, what were your expectations or how did you think vocational rehabilitation could help you?

1. Help getting a job
2. Help with college/school/other training
3. Help finding a career that matched my abilities/that I could do
4. Help with hearing aids
5. Unsure/No expectations
6. Help learning how to adjust to my disability
7. Help connecting with employers/businesses
8. Help becoming independent/self sufficient
9. Help with assistive technology

13. During the referral and eligibility process, what, if any, barriers or challenges did you experience?

1. None
2. Amount of time it took
3. Communication difficulties
4. Difficulty completing evaluations and having evaluation reports get to counselor/difficulty and length of time to obtain existing medical records
5. Problems with my disability got in the way
6. The way staff made me feel
7. Paperwork and process too involved
8. Number of staff changes
9. Transportation issues

14. Please rate your need for the following services in order to help you get or keep a job and/or live independently.

Educational services	45.9%
Job placement	45.5%
Vocational counseling and guidance	40.8%
Vocational training	39.6%
Physical/Mental restoration	36.7%
On the job training (OJT)	30.3%
Learning how my disability affects ability to work	26.8%
Job seeking skills training	26.5%

15. If you received the following service(s), please rate how helpful the service was in helping you get or keep a job and/or to become more independent.

Adjustment training	Very helpful
Assessment (situational/vocational)	Very Helpful
Assistive technology	Very Helpful
Educational services	Very Helpful
Physical/mental restoration	Very Helpful
Supportive Services	Very Helpful
Vocational counseling and guidance	Very Helpful
Vocational training	Very Helpful
Other	Very Helpful
Job coaching	Somewhat Helpful
Learn how disability affects ability to work	Somewhat Helpful
Homemaker	Not Helpful or NA
Job placement	Not Helpful or NA
Job seeking skills training	Not Helpful or NA
On the job training (OJT)	Not Helpful or NA
Self employment info/services	Not Helpful or NA

16. Were there other services that are not listed above that would have been helpful to you in getting and keeping a job and/or living independently?

1. Housing assistance
2. Better vendors
3. Ability to switch counselors
4. More help with medical needs
5. Advocacy
6. Help with finances/budgeting
7. Help with purchase/repair of vehicles

17. Please choose the top five barriers you feel prevent or hinder you from getting and keeping a job and/or leading a fuller and more independent life.

Economy	69.5%
Health/physical limitations	69.2%
Amount hours can physically work	47.8%
Employer attitudinal barriers	45.8%
Lack of work experience	40.0%
Other	33.6%
Disability benefits	30.8%
Lack of medical care/insurance	30.5%
Lack of available rehabilitation services	22.3%
Lack of transportation	22.1%
Lack of long term supports	20.7%
Lack of qualified service providers	17.8%
Criminal record/convictions	12.1%
Lack of adequate/stable housing	11.8%
Lack of family support	9.7%
Language/cultural barriers	9.3%
Lack of child care	5.1%
TANF	2.0%

18. Please check the section that best reflects your satisfaction with vocational rehabilitation services.

DVR staff treat me with respect and courtesy	Strongly agree	64.3%
DVR staff is kind and helpful	Strongly agree	61.7%
My DVR counselor listened to my needs and concerns	Strongly agree	60.4%
My experience with DVR was good and I would recommend it to others	Strongly agree	48.2%
I was involved in choosing my job goal	Strongly agree	48.1%
My DVR counselor understood my disability and my needs	Strongly agree	46.9%
My job goal matches my skills, abilities and capabilities	Strongly agree	46.2%
My DVR counselor/other staff called me back within 48 hours	Strongly agree	43.0%
Overall, DVR assisted me appropriately to obtain employment related goals	Strongly agree	34.7%
I was involved in choosing the services/vendors I needed to reach my job goal	Strongly agree	34.2%

Overall my services were provided in a timely manner	Strongly agree	33.9%
My counselor helped me to understand my disability and how it might affect my ability to work	Strongly agree	32.8%
My quality of life has improved as a result of DVR services	Strongly agree	32.6%
DVR services have helped me get a job	No opinion	42.2%
The types of jobs available to me now are better than when I first started working with DVR	No opinion	41.1%
I got the help I needed to find work that fit my job goal	No opinion	37.4%
The services I received from DVR helped me reach my job goal	No opinion	34.0%

*NOTE: For the responses whose highest responses were “no opinion”, the second highest ranking for each of these statements was “Strongly agree”.

19. Overall, how would you rate the quality of services you received from DVR?

Excellent	44.0%
Good	26.2%
Poor	15.3%
Fair	14.6%

20. What could DVR have done differently to improve the services you were provided?

1. Timelier/faster services/quicker movement through the process
2. Better follow through/follow up with consumers in all stages of process; reach out to consumers instead of waiting for them to contact you
3. Listen to consumer better and treat consumer with more respect and courtesy
4. Improved, more frequent and clear communication from DVR staff
5. Counselor should be more involved and help consumer more with paperwork, forms, job search (more one on one contact with consumers)
6. Hire more counselors and decrease caseload sizes; more stability in counselor positions
7. Streamline the process with less hoops to jump through/less cumbersome process
8. Be more up front in telling consumers what services are available; have a list of all services possible

21. What else could DVR have done to assist you in reaching your job goals?

1. Provide more direct or one-on-one help with job seeking skills and job placement
2. Follow through, communicate more effectively and more often and listen to consumer more
3. Provide more educational and/or other training opportunities
4. Work more to find a job goal that better fits my disabilities
5. Provide a list or give clients a better understanding of all services that are available

22. Please tell us anything else you think we should know for setting future goals and priorities for improving DVR services.

1. Provide better follow through and reach out to consumers to help keep them engaged
2. Hire more counselors and decrease caseload size to provide more stability with counselor positions
3. Evaluate staff and hold them accountable; reprimand when needed
4. Have more empathy and understanding of consumer's situations, needs and treat them with respect
5. Timelier services
6. Improve communication with all parties (consumers, vendors, partners...)
7. Help consumers look more closely at their disability to find a job goal that is a good fit for their situation
8. Be more involved in job seeking and placement activities with consumer
9. Develop more relationships with employers willing to hire people with disabilities

When reviewing the data from the general customer satisfaction survey, it was noted that of the 891 respondents, 191 self-reported as minorities.

In question #17 "Please choose the top five barriers you feel prevent or hinder you from getting and keeping a job and/or leading a fuller and more independent life", there were at least five areas that minorities saw as bigger barriers to employment than did non-minorities. These areas included a) disability benefits, b) lack of available rehabilitation services, c) lack of transportation, d) lack of qualified service providers, and e) lack of adequate/stable housing.

3. Consumers seeking employment survey

This survey was sent to a) 477 consumers via their email addresses and b) 543 consumers via their mailing addresses for a total of 1,020. The purpose of this survey was to seek information from consumers actively looking for work to find out what has been helpful to them in their job search, how we might improve services to help them obtain employment and to find out if there are areas of service that we are missing that need to be addressed. The goal was to determine if there are strategies to help improve or increase the quality and number of successful employment outcomes DVR consumers. The survey was open for completion for two weeks and there were 104 responses for a response rate of 10.19%.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. What is your primary disability?

Emotional/mental health	26.0%
Deaf/hard of hearing	22.1%
Orthopedic	14.4%
Traumatic brain injury	9.6%
Learning disability	7.7%
Neurological	6.7%
Developmental disability	5.8%
Autism spectrum disorder	4.8%
Blind/visual impairment	2.9%
Alcohol/drug addiction	0.0%

2. Do you have other disabilities?

No other disabilities	51.9%
Emotional/mental health	11.5%
Learning disability	10.6%
Deaf/hard of hearing	8.7%
Neurological	7.7%
Traumatic brain injury	4.8%
Alcohol/drug addiction	3.8%
Blind/visual impairment	2.9%
Autism spectrum disorder	1.0%

3. How old are you?

46-65 years old	53.8%
22-45 years old	39.4%
Older than 65	4.8%
Less than 21 years old	1.9%

4. What is your gender?

Female	56.7%
Male	43.3%

5. What is your level of education?

Some college, vocational or trade school (no certificate or degree)	28.8%
Bachelor's degree	26.0%
Associate's degree	16.3%
High school diploma or GED	14.4%
Master's degree	11.5%

6. Please indicate your race and/or ethnic background.

White	78.8%
African American or Black	9.6%
Hispanic/Latino	7.7%
Asian	2.9%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.0%

7. Where is your DVR office located?

Colorado Springs	20.2%
Denver Metro	16.3%
Aurora	10.6%
Boulder	9.6%
Fort Collins	9.6%
Northglenn	6.7%
Longmont	5.8%
Pueblo	5.8%
Grand Junction	4.8%
Greeley	4.8%
Greenwood Village	2.9%
Golden	1.9%
Montrose	1.0%
Alamosa	0.0%
Craig	0.0%
Durango	0.0%
Edwards	0.0%
Frisco	0.0%
Glenwood Springs	0.0%
Lamar	0.0%
Limon	0.0%
Rocky Ford	0.0%
Salida	0.0%
Steamboat Springs	0.0%
Sterling	0.0%

8. Please indicate how involved you feel you were in the process of choosing your job goal and in making decisions about your job development plan.

Very involved	63.5%
Somewhat involved	24.0%
Somewhat excluded	6.7%
Very excluded	5.8%

9. Please indicate how willing your counselor is to listen to your ideas about what type of job you want and what services you think you need to get a job.

Very willing	59.6%
Somewhat willing	26.0%
Somewhat unwilling	11.5%
Not willing	2.9%

10. Please rate how easy it is to talk to your counselor about matters related to your job search.

Very easy	54.8%
Somewhat easy	18.3%
Somewhat difficult	16.3%
Very difficult	10.6%

11. Please rate how helpful your counselor was in assisting you in figuring out a good job goal that fits your strengths, abilities, and capabilities.

Very helpful	51.0%
Somewhat helpful	37.5%
Not helpful	11.5%

12. Please rate how helpful your counselor is in assisting you in determining the services you need to be able to successfully reach your job goal.

Very helpful	46.2%
Somewhat helpful	36.5%
Not helpful	17.3%

13. Does your rehabilitation counselor give you information about job openings that fit your job goal?

Yes	56.7%
No	43.3%

14. How useful/appropriate are the job openings provided to you by your rehabilitation counselor?

Did not receive job leads from my rehabilitation counselor	32.7%
Very useful/appropriate	28.8%
Somewhat useful/appropriate	25.0%
Not useful/appropriate	13.5%

15. How satisfied are you with the amount of contact you have with your DVR counselor during your job search?

Very satisfied	35.6%
Somewhat satisfied	34.6%
Somewhat dissatisfied	17.3%
Very dissatisfied	12.5%

16. Please identify the person(s), if there is anyone else, that has or continues to help you with your job search.

Job developer hired by DR	35.6%
No one	26.0%
Business Outreach Specialist (BOS)	21.2%
Friend or family member	20.2%
Other DVR staff	14.4%
SWAP staff	0.0%

17. How helpful has the assistance you receive from the person(s) you designated in the question above been to you in finding a job?

Very helpful	43.3%
Somewhat helpful	35.6%
Not helpful	21.2%

18. If you have worked with a Business Outreach Specialist (BOS), job developer or SWAP staff, how satisfied are you with the amount of contact you have with them during your job search?

Very satisfied	35.6%
Somewhat satisfied	28.8%
Somewhat dissatisfied	20.2%
Very dissatisfied	15.4%

19. How long has DVR been helping you look for a job?

0-6 months	28.8%
1 year to 2 years	27.9%
7 months to 1 year	26.0%
More than 4 years	9.6%
2 years to 4 years	7.7%

20. How many hours a week do you spend looking for work?

0-5 hours	27.9%
6-10 hours	27.9%
16-20 hours	14.4%
11-15 hours	13.5%
More than 30 hours	8.7%
21-25 hours	4.8%
26-30 hours	2.9%

21. How many applications do you complete each week?

0-5	58.7%
6-10	26.9%
11-15	5.8%
20 or more	4.8%
16-20	3.8%

22. What are the top five barriers you feel are preventing or hindering you from getting a job?

Slow job market/economy	89.4%
Employer attitudinal barriers	61.5%
Lack of work experience	57.7%
Lack of work experience	57.7%
Health/physical/mental limitations	56.7%
Amount of hours I can physically/mentally work	40.4%
Lack of qualified service providers	28.8%
Disability benefits	27.9%
Lack of available rehabilitation services	23.1%
Lack of transportation	23.1%
Lack of long term supports	20.2%
Lack of adequate or inadequate medical care/medical insurance	19.2%
Lack of family support	17.3%
Language/cultural barriers	15.4%
Criminal record	7.7%
Lack of adequate/stable housing	7.7%
Lack of child care	2.9%
TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)	1.0%

23. DVR staff can directly provide the following services to assist consumers with their job search. Please indicate if you receive(d) any of these services(s) directly from DVR, and if so, how helpful the services(s) were to you during your job search. (The answers below are those with the highest response rates.)

Statement	Response	Response Rate
Resume (preparation of resume, copies of resume)	Very helpful	41.3%
Placement clothing	Very helpful	31.7%
Job seeking skills training	Very helpful	31.7%
Job club	Very helpful	10.6%
Resume (preparation of resume, copies of resume)	Somewhat helpful	27.9%
Job seeking skills training	Somewhat helpful	21.2%
Job club	Somewhat helpful	8.7%
Placement clothing	Somewhat helpful	5.8%
Job club	Did not receive	70.2%
Placement clothing	Did not receive	58.7%
Job seeking skills training	Did not receive	39.4%
Resume (preparation of resume, copies of resume)	Did not receive	27.9%

24. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the assistance you have received from DVR to get a job.

Very satisfied	41.3%
Somewhat satisfied	25.9%
Somewhat dissatisfied	19.2%
Very dissatisfied	14.4%

25. What changes could DVR make to improve our ability to assist consumers in finding employment?

1. Increase networking and contact with employers willing to hire people with disabilities
2. Help me more
3. More training for counselors on how to work with consumers with higher levels of education/experience or higher level career goals
4. Listen to consumers more
5. Be timelier throughout the process
6. More stability in counselor positions
7. Improved communication
8. Improved follow through
9. Increased educational/training opportunities
10. Increase counselors knowledge about more career fields
11. BOS increase contact/communication/help more with job search

26. What other services might help you to find a job?

1. More educational/training opportunities
2. Connect more with employers; esp. those willing to hire people with disabilities
3. Basic computer skill training
4. Website of jobs for people with disabilities
5. More help for consumers with higher levels of education/experience
6. Assistance with transportation
7. Increased counseling/therapy

27. Please tell us anything else you feel we should know when we plan our future goals and priorities for improving how DVR assists people to find employment.

1. Increase communication and follow up
2. Provide more educational/training opportunities for consumers
3. More stability in counselor positions/Fill vacancies faster
4. Hire more staff/decrease caseload sizes
5. Increase communication with employers (work incentives, benefits of hiring person with a disability, have employers come meet DVR consumers...)
6. More job options for those with higher levels of education/experience
7. Be more caring and understanding
8. Increased basic computer skills training

4. All DVR Staff

This survey was sent to all DVR staff via email. The purpose of this survey was to obtain information from staff about what is working well, what they are struggling with, how we could improve services, how we could be more effective in providing services, what areas we may need to provide more training in, etc. We hope to use the information received to help us set our goals and priorities for the upcoming years to help us improve the services we provide. The survey was open for completion for two weeks. The survey was emailed to 243 staff and 140 responded, equaling a response rate of 57.6%.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. Please indicate your position within the agency.

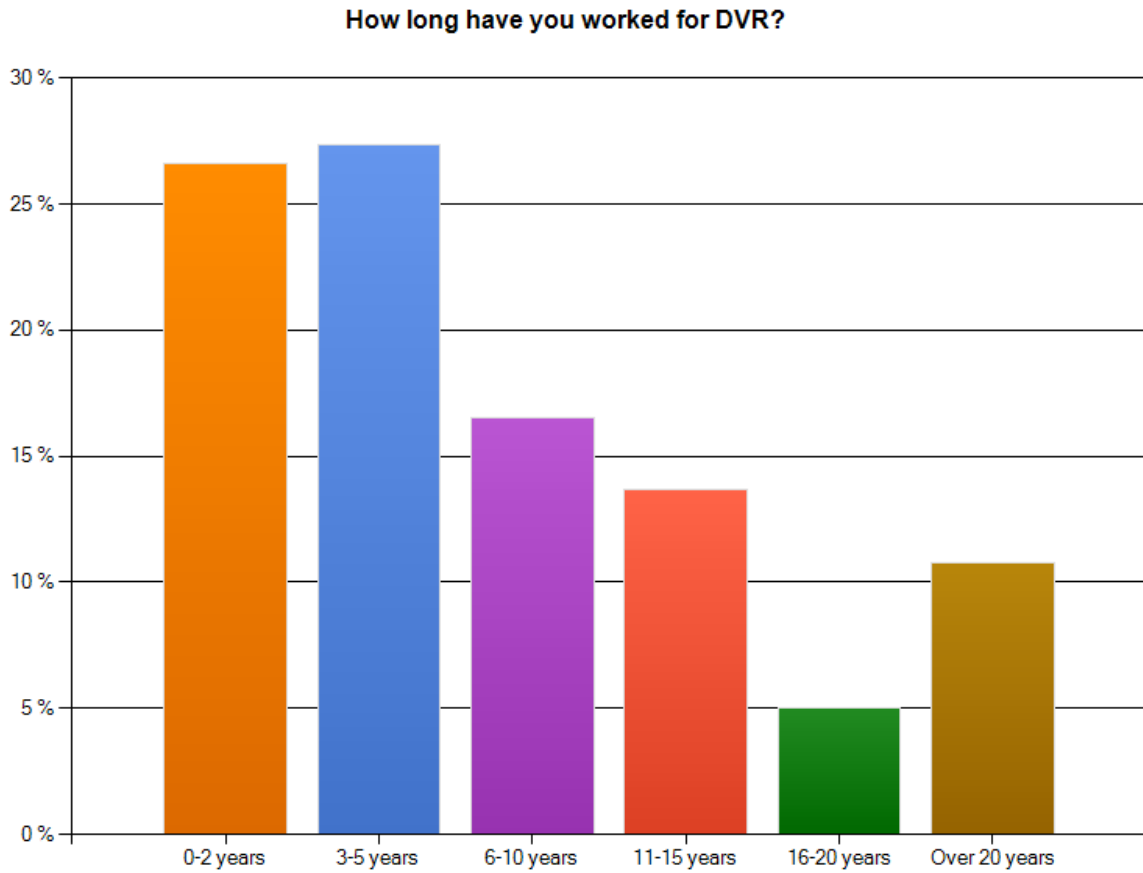
Rehabilitation Counselor I/II	53.2%
Support Staff	12.9%
Administration	12.9%
Supervisor I/II	9.4%
Teacher	5.8%
Business Outreach Specialist	5.8%

2. Where is your DVR office located?

Denver Metro	18.0%
Administration office (1575 Sherman)	11.5%
Colorado Springs	10.8%
Fort Collins	8.6%
Pueblo	5.8%
Boulder	5.0%
Aurora	4.3%
Golden	4.3%
Northglenn	3.6%

Greeley	2.9%
Alamosa	2.2%
Edwards	2.2%
Greenwood Village	2.2%
Steamboat Springs	2.2%
Durango	1.4%
Montrose	1.4%
Frisco	1.4%
Glenwood Springs	1.4%
Craig	0.7%
Lamar	0.7%
Longmont	0.7%
Business Enterprise Program	0.0%
Limon	0.0%
Salida	0.0%
Rocky Ford	0.0%
Sterling	0.0%

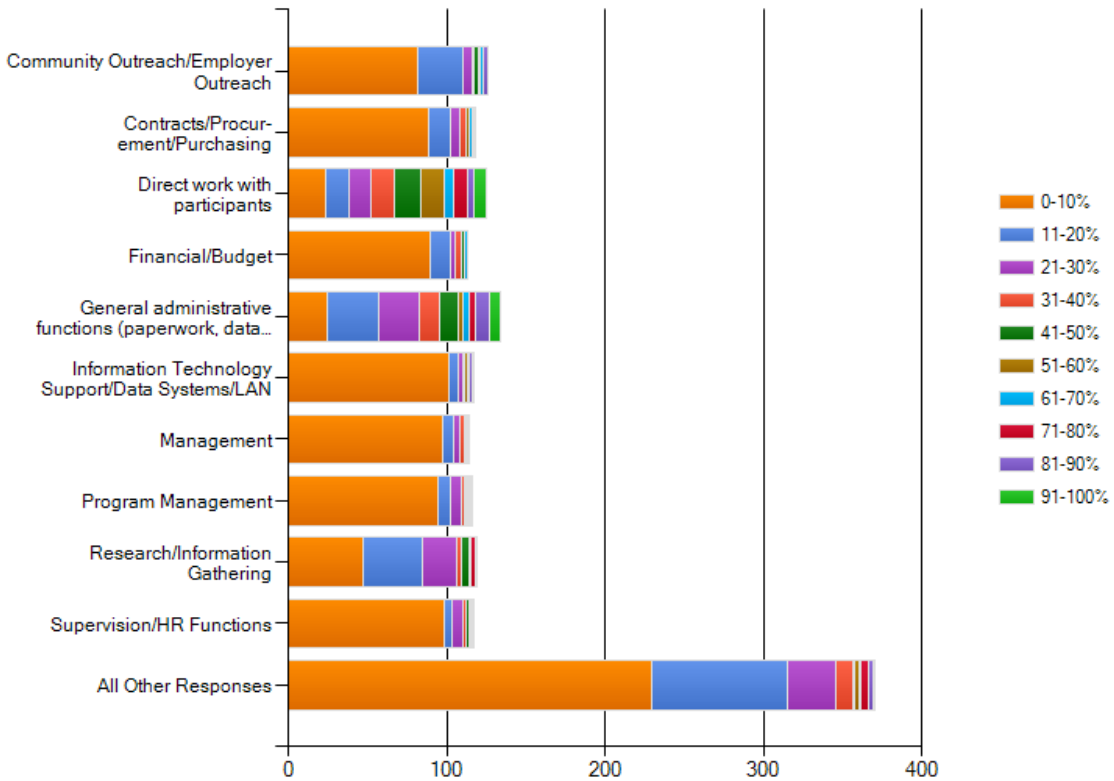
3. How long have you worked for DVR?



3-5 years	27.3%
0-2 years	26.6%
6-10 years	16.5%
11-15 years	13.7%
Over 20 years	10.8%
16-20 years	5.0%

4. Please estimate the percentage of your time that you spend on the following work activities.
(The following is a summary of those activities staff spend most time on.)

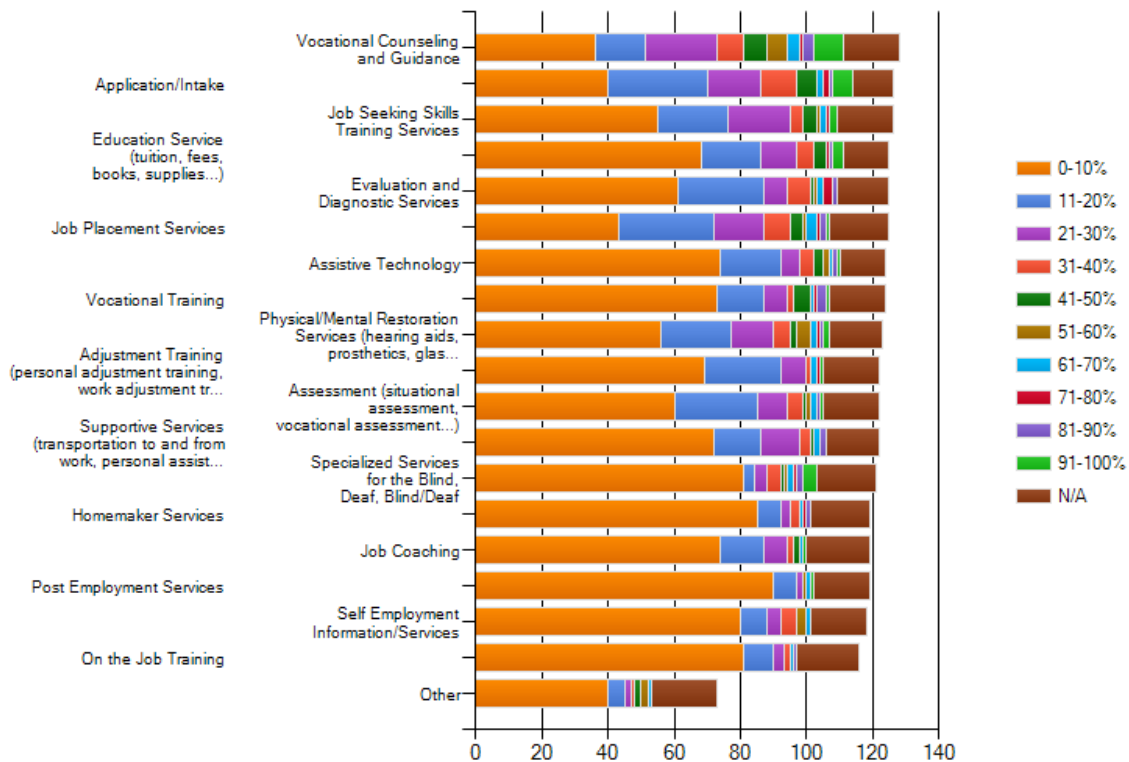
Please estimate the percentage of your time that you spend on the following work activities. (Please select only one answer in each row. Total should equal 100%.)



1. Direct work with participants
2. General administrative functions (paperwork, copying, filing, phones...)
3. Community outreach
4. Research/information gathering
5. Training/mentoring other staff
6. Other (committee meetings, attending trainings...)

5. Please think about the time you spend working directly with participants or arranging services for them. Please estimate the percent of time that you spend working in the following areas. (The following is a summary of those activities staff spend most time on.)

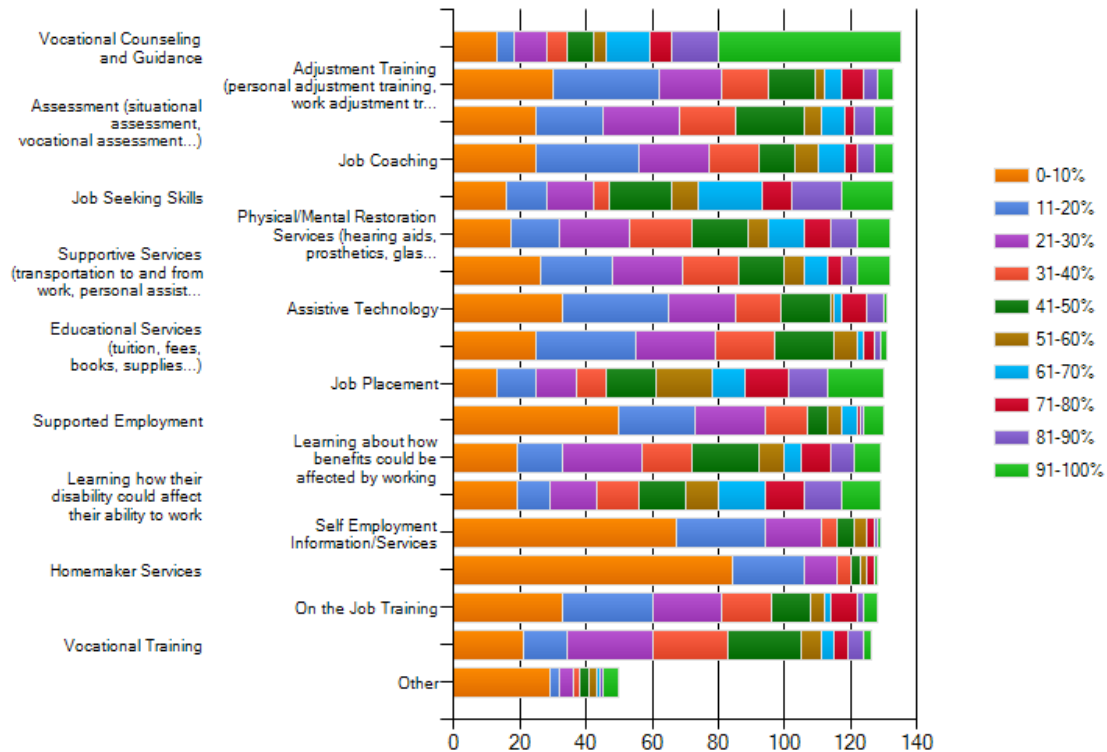
Please think about the time you spend working directly with participants or arranging services for them. Please estimate the percent of time that you spend working in the following areas. (Please select only one answer in each row. Total should equal 100%.)



1. Intake
2. Assessment
3. Evaluation/diagnostics
4. Job seeking skills training
5. Vocational counseling and guidance
6. Job placement

6. Please estimate the percentage of people with disabilities who you feel have a need for the following service(s) to help them to get or keep a job and/or live independently. (The following is a summary of the services staff feels are those of highest need.)

Please estimate the percentage of people with disabilities who you feel have a need for the following service(s) to help them to get or keep a job and/or live independently: (Please select one answer for each row)



1. Job placement
2. Job seeking skills training
3. Vocational counseling and guidance
4. Learning how their disability affects their ability to work
5. Physical/mental restoration
6. Job coaching
7. Educational services
8. Vocational training
9. Adjustment training

7. Are there other services needed by participants that DVR does not currently provide that would be helpful for their employment and/or independence?

1. Housing assistance

2. Referrals to other programs or assistance/resources

3. Basic computer skills training

4. Paid work experience

5. Job seeking/job club/networking opportunities

6. More opportunity for supported employment/more long term support options

8. Please select the top five barriers that you feel prevent or hinder participants from getting and keeping a job and/or leading a more independent life.

Criminal records/convictions	64.7%
Slow job market/economy	55.4%
Health/physical limitations	41.0%
Employer attitudinal barriers	39.6%
Amount of hours they can physically/mentally work	38.8%
Lack of transportation	36.7%
Lack of work experience	36.0%
Drug use (legal or illegal drug usage)	30.2%
Disability benefits	25.2%
Lack of adequate medical care/insurance	24.5%
Lack of qualified service providers	24.5%
Lack of long term supports	19.4%
Lack of consistent means of communication	15.8%
Other	13.7%
Lack of adequate/stable housing	10.8%
Language/cultural barriers	4.3%
Lack of family support	4.3%
Lack of child care	3.5%
Lack of available vocational rehabilitation services	2.2%
TANF	2.2%

9. Please tell us how DVR can improve the services we provide to people with disabilities to help them reach their employment and/or independent living goals.

1. Hire more staff, (especially counselors) and decrease caseload sizes to allow more one-on-one time with consumers

2. Increase the number and quality of vendors, especially for diagnostics and placement

3. Increase consumer motivation and consumers responsibility

4. Increase effectiveness of vocational counseling and guidance and knowledge of local job markets to help create stronger employment goals (strengthen comprehensive assessment process)

5. Increase education of employers regarding hiring people with disabilities

6. Increase education for partners, referral sources, consumers of DVR.... about who DVR is, what we do and stress "employment focused"

7. Increased use of BOS' for placement

8. Increase consistency among counselors regarding following policy and fee schedule

9. Increase use of CMT/MET

10. Please rate how confident you are in your ability to effectively perform the following tasks.
 (Answers below indicate response with highest confidence level.)

Statement	Response	Confidence level
Provide good customer service to participants.	Very confident	78.4%
Provide good customer service to internal customers.	Very confident	77.5%
Explain DVR services to participants	Very confident	75.2%
Provide customer service to community partners	Very confident	71.3%
Explain DVR services to community partners	Very confident	71.0%
Conduct effective intakes	Very confident	68.1%
Enter data accurately	Very confident	63.5%
Provide effective counseling and guidance	Very confident	54.3%
Synthesize medical documentation for eligibility	Very confident	51.4%
Determine necessary and appropriate services	Very confident	49.6%
Training and mentoring staff	Very confident	45.9%
Determine appropriate job goals	Very confident	45.2%
Developing effective community partnerships	Very confident	38.7%
Support staff to increase levels of performance	Very confident	36.3%
Resolving billing issues	Very confident	35.8%
Resolving customer complaints	Somewhat confident	41.2%
Recruiting vendors	Somewhat confident	25.7%
Registering vendors	Somewhat confident	25.4%
Holding staff accountable to performance standards	Somewhat confident	18.5%

11. Please describe any barriers you feel prevent you from performing your job in the most effective manner.

1. Heavy/large workload

2. Lack of support from supervisor

3. Lack of communication

4. Not enough time to do everything that needs to be done

5. Lack of available technology (old versions of software, no cell phones, internet access)

6. Vendor issues

7. Inequity among staff/offices

8. Governmental policies and bureaucracies/amount of paperwork

9. Time to resolve IT issues

10. AWARE issues (performance issues, need for more training...)

11. Lack of resources/materials

12. Please indicate how satisfied you are with the level of support you receive from: (Answers below indicate responses with highest percentage response.)

Statement	Response	Response rate
Peers	Very satisfied	62.8%
Supervisor	Very satisfied	50.7%
Work supports and employer engagement unit	Somewhat satisfied	67.2%
Programs and program development unit	Somewhat satisfied	65.6%
Organizational and planning development unit	Somewhat satisfied	64.8%
Operations/infrastructure unit	Somewhat satisfied	64.6%
Field management team	Somewhat satisfied	53.0%

13. If you are unsatisfied with any unit, what could they do to better support your work?

1. Respondents indicated they were unsure what each unit did
2. Increased communication, more frequent communication, more transparent communication
3. Be equitable and stop showing favoritism
4. Make staff accountable
5. Remember what it is like in the field
6. Be open to listening to all staff and all ideas
7. Be timelier and respond more quickly to staff
8. Appreciation/recognition
9. Provide more training, support and teambuilding for administrative/support staff

14. If very satisfied by any unit, what makes their support so effective?

1. Their responsiveness and timeliness
2. They communicate well
3. They are knowledgeable
4. They are appreciative and supportive
5. They are available when I need help
6. Their teamwork approach
7. Their professionalism

15. How knowledgeable are you about the roles of the following programs within DVR?
(Answers below indicate highest response rate for each selection.)

SWAP	Very knowledgeable	52.5%
Business Enterprise Program (BEP)	Somewhat knowledgeable	50.0%
Client Assistance Program (CAP)	Somewhat knowledgeable	49.6%
DD Supported Employment	Somewhat knowledgeable	48.2%
Independent Living Center (ILC)	Somewhat knowledgeable	44.6%
TBI Program	Somewhat knowledgeable	43.4%
Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG)	Somewhat knowledgeable	41.3%
Mental Health Contract (Fund 07)	Somewhat knowledgeable	41.0%
Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND)	Somewhat knowledgeable	34.5%

16. Rate how available or suitable the following resources are to support your effectiveness in completing job tasks.

Adequate work space	Very available or suitable	64.0%
Effective new staff training	Somewhat available or suitable	53.7%
Communication from leadership	Somewhat available or suitable	47.5%
Adequate technology	Somewhat available or suitable	46.0%
Effective work environment	Somewhat available or suitable	46.0%
Pertinent professional development opportunities	Somewhat available or suitable	44.2%

17. If you answered not available or not suitable above, what changes would increase your effectiveness?

1. Keep up with the times, esp. in regards to technology (software programs, laptops for everyone, cell phones...)

2. Improved communication from management to field

3. Better workspace

4. Increase training opportunities (more training for all staff, increase the number of new counselor trainings per year, send notifications of trainings out sooner)

5. More opportunities for administrative/support staff (promotional opportunities, teambuilding activities)

6. More promotional opportunities for everyone within their specialty areas (administrative/support staff, BOS'...)

18. Are you considering leaving employment with DVR within the next year to five years?

Yes	51.8%
No	48.2%

19. If you are considering leaving DVR, why are you considering leaving?

1. No opportunities for advancement
2. Lack of raises and performance incentives
3. Career change
4. Relocation/moving
5. I feel I can use my skills better somewhere else
6. Work environment
7. Favoritism
8. Unhappy with supervisor
9. Not all staff are held accountable
10. Lack of self confidence/ need more training
11. Too many felons and no training to know how to work with them
12. Cannot afford to work where I live

20. If you are considering leaving, what would help you want to stay?

1. Pay raise/cost of living increase
2. Decreased workload/smaller caseload size
3. Increase in morale and working conditions
4. Promotional opportunities
5. Being treated better by supervisor; more support from supervisor
6. More accountability for all staff
7. Pay for performance/years of experience and skills
8. Fill counselor vacancies

21. In general, how do you rate your knowledge of other agencies and systems that are resources for DVR consumers?

Good	61.9%
Adequate	17.3%
Fair	10.1%
Excellent	9.4%
Poor	1.4%

22. Please tell us anything else you think we should know for setting goals and priorities for improving DVR services.

1. Fill vacancies and do so more quickly
2. More equity across the state (resources, caseload sizes...)
3. Accountability for staff
4. Smaller workloads/caseload sizes
5. Limit services for clients (number of years their case can be open, number of times they can apply for services...)
6. Educate and build relationships with employers and partners
7. Increase in pay
8. Treat staff with more respect and appreciation
9. Training for all supervisors, not just new ones
10. BOS' involved in more direct placement and be out in the field more

5. High Production/High Quality Counselors Survey

This survey was sent to counselors identified with consistently high production/high quality casework over the last three to five years. The purpose of this survey was to ask questions of these staff to determine if there are patterns, tips, techniques, etc. that are consistently being done that assist the counselor in obtaining successful outcomes so that these tips, techniques.. could be shared with other staff or so that training could be developed for staff to help others increase their performance. The survey was sent to 37 staff and 25 responded for a response rate of 67.5%.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. What office/region do you work in?

Denver Metro	28.0%
Colorado Springs	12.0%
Longmont	12.0%
Boulder	8.0%
Golden	8.0%
Grand Junction	8.0%
Greenwood Village	8.0%
Durango	4.0%
Fort Collins	4.0%
Frisco	4.0%
Northglenn	4.0%
Steamboat Springs	4.0%

2. How many people are currently open on your caseload?

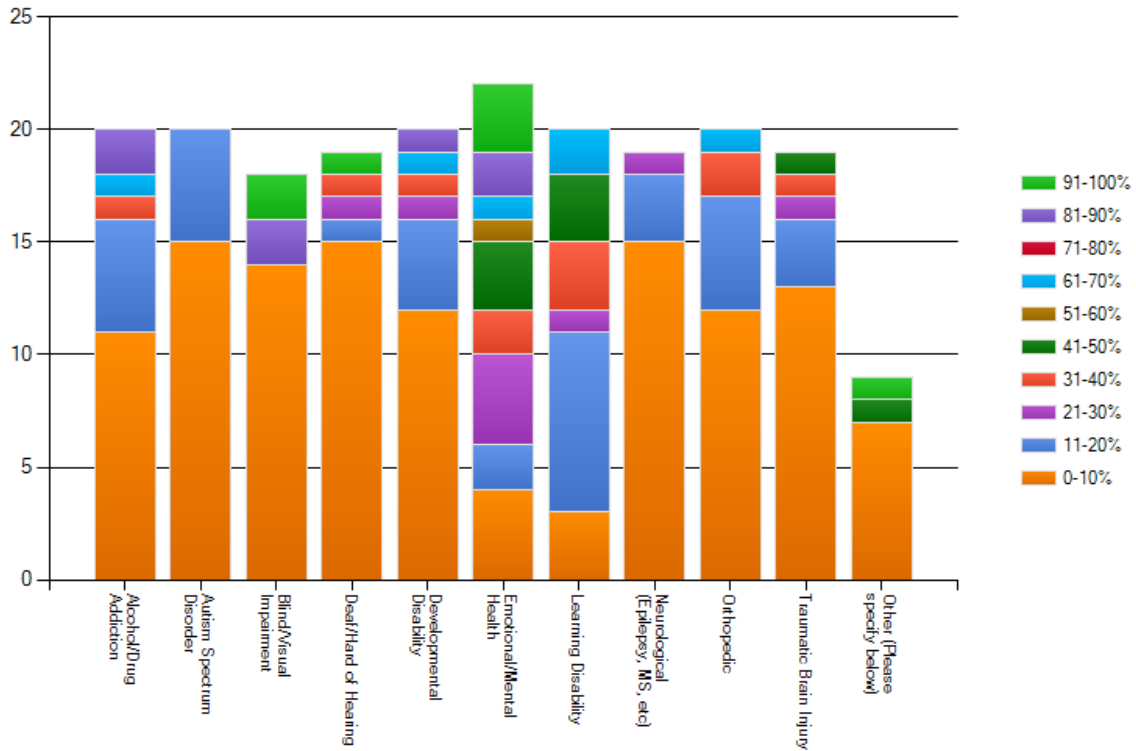
The average caseload size was 92.4 consumers. The largest caseload was 154 consumers and the smallest caseload was 10 consumers.

3. How many people are you “actively” working with at this time?

The average caseload size that counselors indicated they were “actively” working with was 77.9 consumers. The largest caseload someone was “actively” working with was reported as 140 consumers and the smallest caseload someone indicated they were “actively” working with was 10 consumers.

4. Please estimate the percentage of participants on your caseload who have the following disability as their primary disability. (Answers below indicate the top disabilities indicated.)

Please estimate the percentage of participants on your caseload who have the following disability as their primary disability (Please select only one answer per row. The total should equal 100%).



1. Emotional/mental health

2. Learning disability

3. Autism

4. Developmental disability

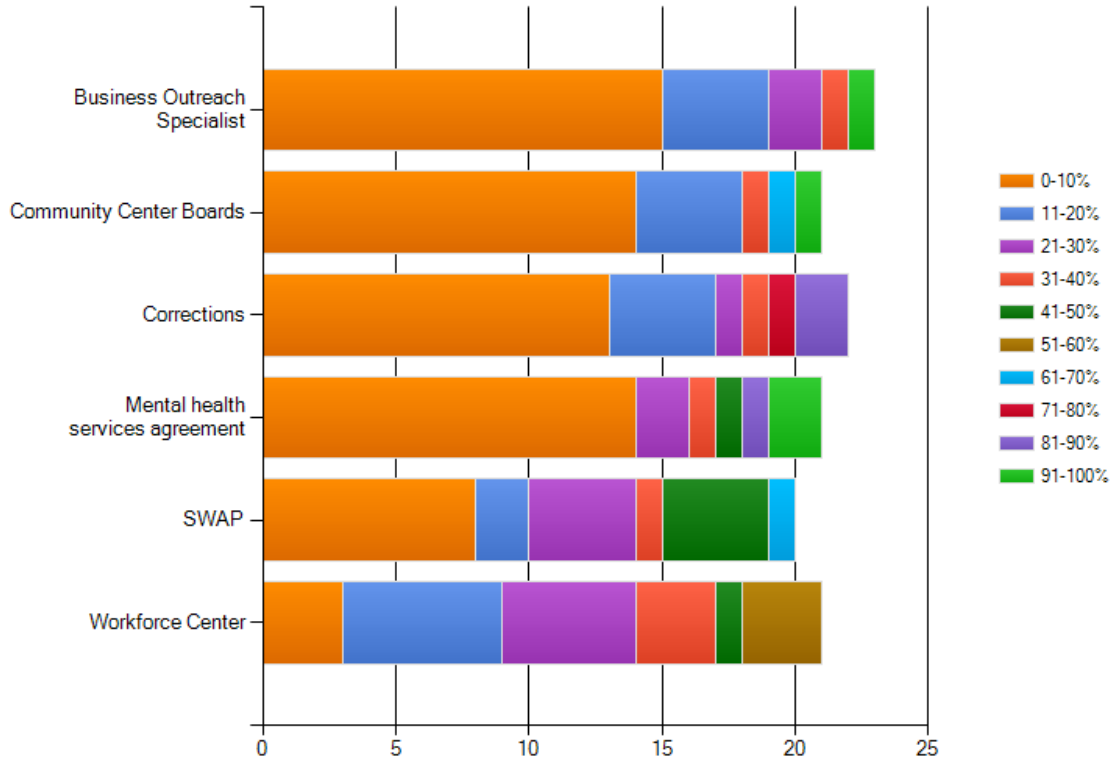
5. Traumatic Brain Injury

6. Neurological

7. Orthopedic

5. Please estimate the percentage of participants on your caseload who work with the following programs. (Answers below reflect areas of highest response rate.)

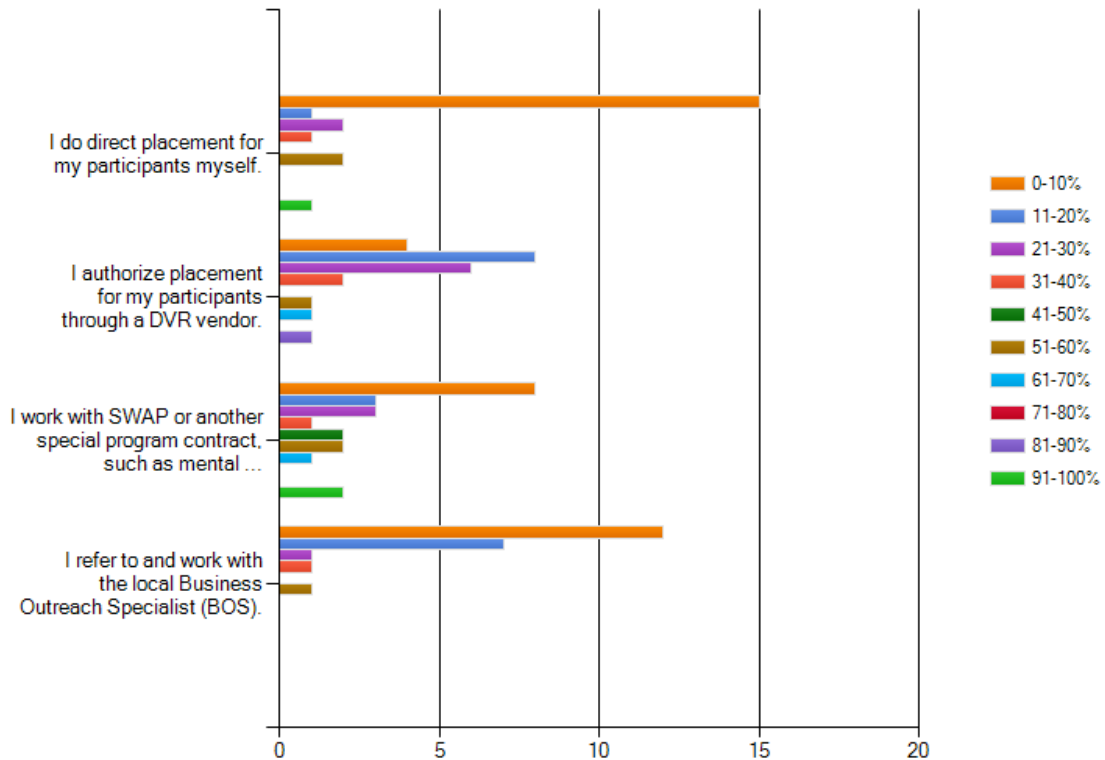
Please estimate the percentage of participants on your caseload who work with the following programs. (Please select only one answer per row. Your answers may equal more than 100% as some participants may work with more than one of the following.)



	0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	51-60%
Business Outreach Specialist (BOS)	65.2%	17.4%			
CCB	66.7%	19.0%			
Corrections	59.1%				

6. In regards to job placement activities, please consider the following four categories and estimate what percentage of participants on your caseload who are actively looking for work fit into each category.

In regards to job placement activities, please consider the following four categories and estimate what percentage of participants on your caseload who are actively looking for work fit into each category (Please select only one answer per row.).



SWAP/other special program contract	1
Authorize placement vendors	2
BOS	3
Counselor does direct placement	4

7. If you provide direct placement for your participants, which method do you use.

My own style/method	48.0%
Combination of my own style/EOP	44.0%
EOP	8.0%

8. If you use both methods (EOP and your own style/method), please indicate the percentage of time you use each style.

Not applicable	48.0%
My own style/method	24.0%
Combination of my own style/EOP	24.0%
EOP	4.0%

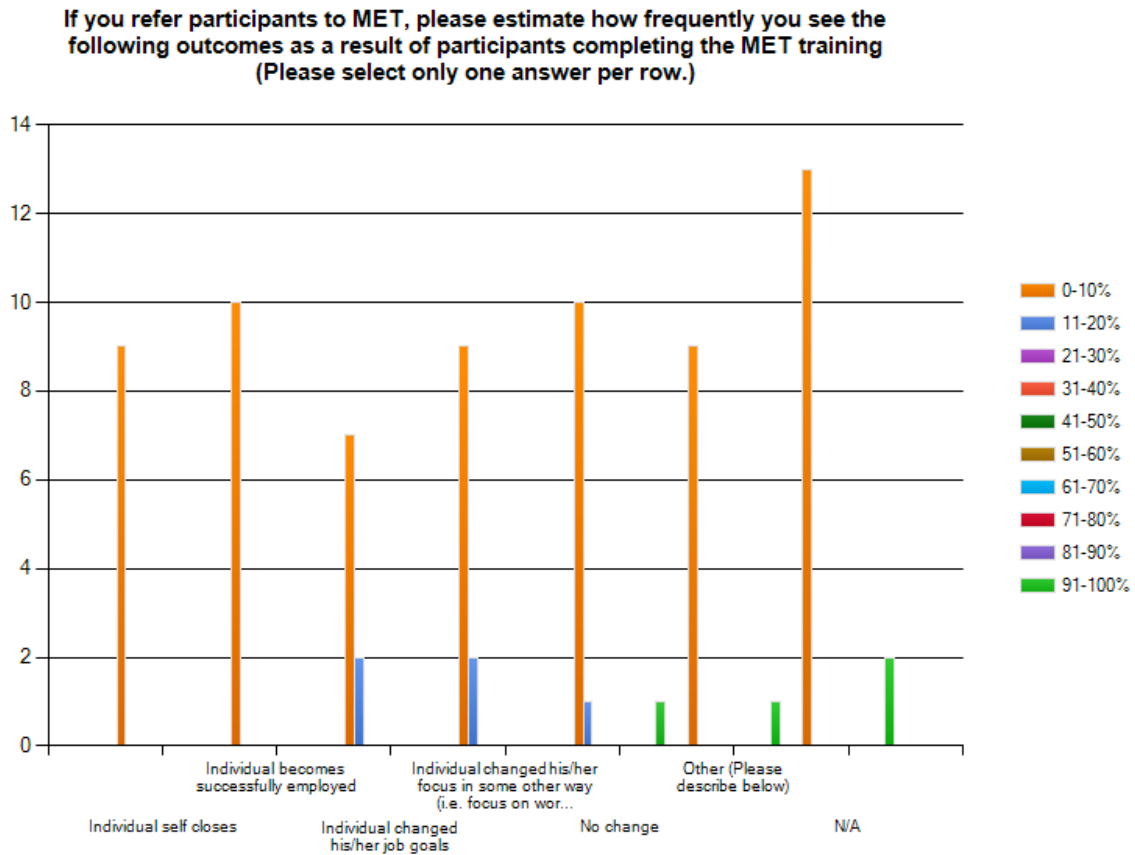
9. If you utilize your own style/method, please briefly describe what your style is and how you approach employers.

1. Directly call/visit employers	10
2. Work behind the scenes providing job leads, helping with resume, interview skills	6
3. Utilize and work with BOS and others	2
4. Networking	2

10. Do you refer participants to MET (Motivational Enhancement Training – also known as Contemplating Change)?

No	64.0%
Yes	36.0%

11. If you refer participants to MET, please estimate how frequently you see the following outcomes as a result of participants completing the MET training? (Answers below indicate most common responses.)



1. N/A (have not referred, scheduling problems...)

2. No change

3. Consumer changed job goal

4. Consumer changed focus in some other way

5. Individual self closed case or became successfully employed (0%)

12. What tips/tools/shortcuts do you use that you think increase your effectiveness/efficiency?

1. To do lists, organizers, time management
2. Auto text, templates and other "shortcuts"
3. Heavily rely on administrative assistant (help with intakes, organization, contacting consumer...)
4. Schedule time on calendar for ALL tasks (intakes, meetings, eligibility and IPE paperwork...)
5. Return phone calls/emails as soon as possible (stay on top of these)
6. Ask consumer to be responsible for doing a lot of the work
7. Meet people in the community
8. Utilize CMT

13. How do you approach your work day?

1. Prioritize and organize ALL tasks
2. Utilize schedule for appointments, paperwork, time in community...
3. Utilize to do lists and organizers for daily, weekly, long term tasks
4. Have a positive attitude/be open minded/personal mission statement
5. Do paperwork/case notes same day as appointments
6. Check phone/emails first thing in the morning and respond (keep on top of correspondence)
7. Get into a routine

14. How do you manage your caseload?

1. Review caseload often (weekly, two times a week, monthly...)
2. Use to do lists to prioritize deadlines and dates for completion
3. Utilize organizers (calendars, GroupWise, AWARE alerts) to schedule as much as possible (intake, eligibilities, IPE's, authorizations, bill payment...)
4. Prioritize tasks
5. Utilize administrative assistant, delegate tasks for them to assist with
6. Actively reach out to and stay in touch with consumers (don't wait for them to contact me)
7. Stay on top of correspondence (emails, phone calls...)

15. What do you think is the most successful strategy that helps you reach/increase your number of successful closures?

1. Teamwork, communication and relationship building (with consumers, vendors, BOS', admin assistant...)
2. Be honest with clients
3. Move quickly and keep moving
4. Stay on top of caseload
5. Recognize which consumers are MRD (motivated, reliable, dependable) and meet with these consumers often
6. Recognize what is not working and make changes
7. Prioritize
8. Utilize CMT to help consumer recognize own motivation for work
9. My work ethic/love of my job

16. What do you think DVR should be doing to enhance our ability to help participants achieve successful employment outcomes?

1. Increase the number and quality of job placement vendors
2. Hire more counselors and decrease caseload sizes
3. Increase administrative support and tasks Admins can do (but with increased training for Admins on DVR policies, customer service, case management)
4. Clear expectations from the beginning to consumers that this is a work program, not a social service program
5. Use the comprehensive assessment process more/more effectively to obtain more realistic job goals
6. Acknowledge what is working well (staff and consumer recognition...) (use the monthly calendar for success stories, focus on these things)
7. Training on how to deal with the more difficult cases
8. Find a way for MET to include or be available to ALL consumers (deaf/blind, youth...)
9. Provide advanced AWARE training
10. Utilize BOS' for more direct placement activities
11. Find a way to improve referral base for more "work minded" referrals
12. Focus on quality and not quantity of placements
13. Reduce the amount of money paid for situational assessments and increase amount paid for job placement
14. Equitable caseload sizes

6. School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) Survey

This survey was sent to 90 SWAP staff. The purpose of the SWAP survey was ask our SWAP partners to provide us feedback about how the partnership is going, what seems to be working well, what might we be able to do to improve services to SWAP youth, etc. The survey was open for completion for two weeks and there were 65 responses for a response rate of 72.2%.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

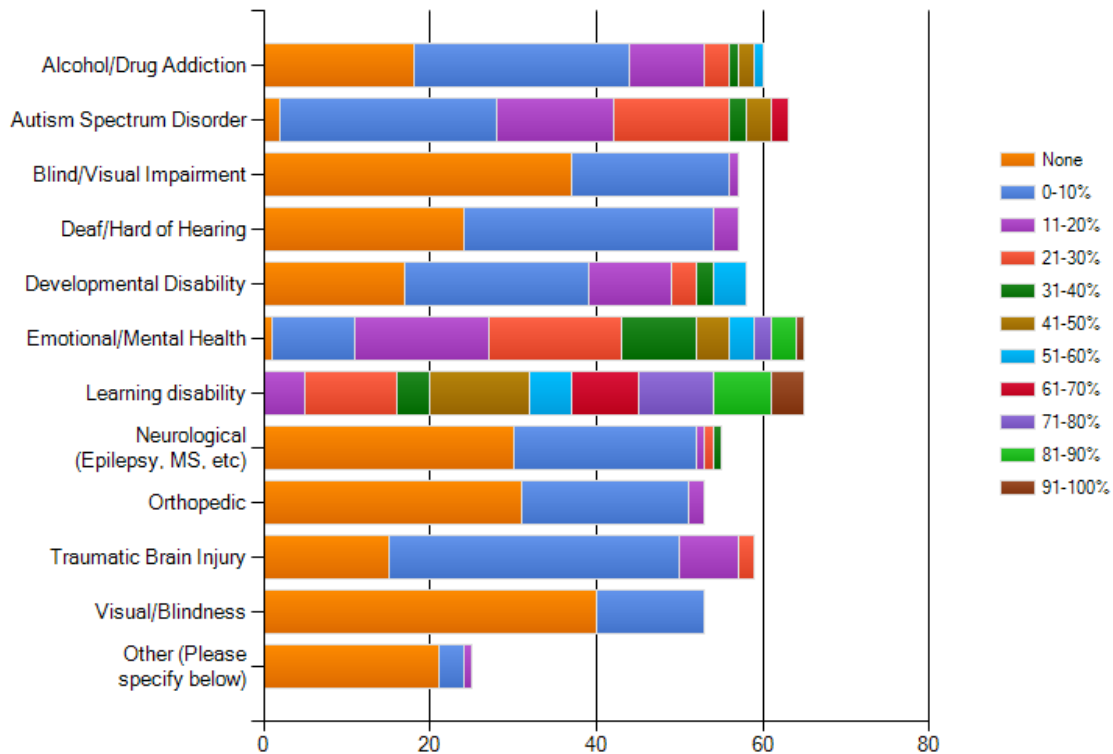
1. What geographic areas do you provide services in?

Front Range (Not Denver Metro)	35.4%
Denver Metro	30.8%
Western Slope	20.%
Mountains	13.8%
Eastern Plains	4.6%

2. Please estimate the percentage of participants that you work with that have the following as their primary disability.

Learning disability
Emotional/mental health
ADD/ADHD
Autism spectrum disorder

Please estimate the percentage of participants that you work with that have the following disability as their primary disability. (Please select only one answer per row. Total should equal 100%.)



3. If the participants you are working with have multiple disabilities, please indicate the disability that makes it hardest for them to get or keep a job.

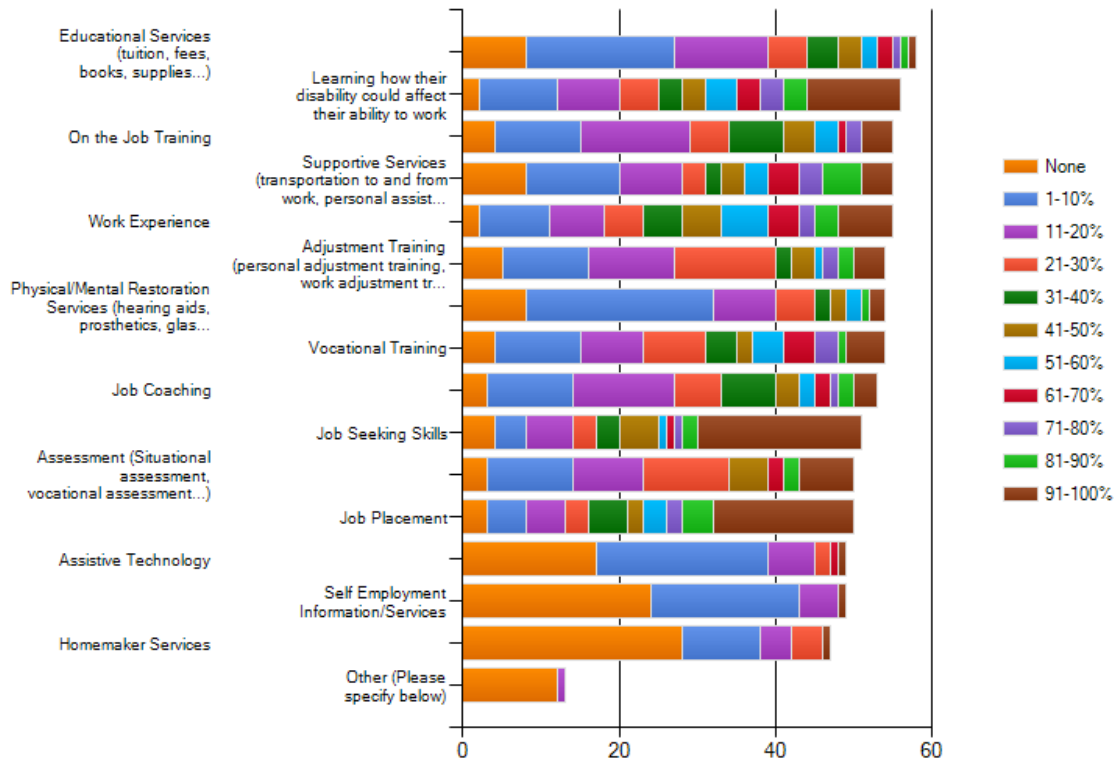
Emotional/mental health	44.6%
Autism spectrum disorder	21.5%
Alcohol/drug addiction	12.3%
Learning disability	10.8%
Traumatic brain injury	4.6%
Developmental disability	3.1%
Blind/visual impairment	1.5%
Neurological	1.5%
Deaf/hard of hearing	0.0%
Orthopedic	0.0%
Other	0.0%

4. What services do you typically provide to youth seeking employment?

Job seeking skills training	100.0%
Assistance with applicable forms	98.5%
Information gathering	98.5%
Assessment (informal and formal)	96.9%
Follow-up beyond successful DVR case closure	96.9%
Case management	95.4%
Vocational guidance	95.4%
Job development and placement	93.8%
Job coaching	92.3%
Year round planning	83.1%
Work adjustment training	78.5%
Job shadow	72.3%
Technical assistance and consultation	72.3%
Personal adjustment training	67.7%
Work based community activities development	56.9%
Community based service provision	47.7%

5. In addition to the services that you directly provide, please estimate the percentage of youth worked with who needed or would have benefited from these other services. (Answers below reflect most common responses.)

In addition to the services that you directly provide, please estimate the percentage of youth you have worked with who needed or would have benefited from these other services. (Please select only one answer per row. Total should equal 100%.)



Supportive services

Learning how their disability affects their ability to work

On the job training (OJT)

Paid work experience

Life Skills

6. Are there other services that you feel youth need to successfully get and keep a job that DVR does not offer/provide at this time?

No	67.7%
N/A	16.9%
Yes	15.4%

7. If you answered yes to the question above, please describe what other services would be helpful to youth to help them get and keep a job.

Transportation
Motivational skills, soft skills, work ethic
Paid work experience
Housing assistance
General resources

8. Please estimate how prepared the youth you work with are to enter the workforce.

Somewhat prepared	46.9%
Somewhat unprepared	26.6%
Very prepared	14.1%
Very unprepared	12.5%

9. If you answered somewhat unprepared or not prepared in the question above, what do you feel would have helped the DVR consumer be more prepared to enter the workforce.

Increased work experience opportunities

Work ethic training

Increased job preparation in the schools (job shadows, OJT's, volunteer work experience)

Increased preparation at home with family

Better assessment of youths abilities

Increased collaboration with schools and DVR

10. What training have you received that has been helpful in preparing you to provide job seeking and job placement services to youth?

Shadowing other SWAP staff/sites

Networking with others

EOP training

Training about specific disability characteristics

11. What other types of training could help you be more effective in your role as a DVR partner in helping youth with disabilities to get and keep a job?

Work incentives training (info on OJT, Stipend, WOTC, etc)

Training on specific disabilities and how to work with them

Job placement and job seeking skill training

IEP review

Job shadowing

DVR staff receiving training on interpersonal skills when communicating/working with youth

12. On average, how often do you communicate with the DVR counselor?

More than once a week	66.7%
Once a week	19.3%
Once every other week	12.3%
Once a month	1.8%
Less than once a month	0.0%

13. Please indicate what you feel are the top five barriers to providing services to participants.

1. Slow job market/economy	71.9%
2. Lack of transportation	70.2%
3. Lack of work experience	61.4%
4. Lack of consistent means of communication	43.9%
5. Employer attitudinal barriers	43.9%
5. Criminal record/convictions	40.4%
6. Drug use (legal or illegal drug use)	36.8%
7. Lack of family support	35.1%
8. Amount of hours they can physically work	21.1%
9. Lack of adequate/stable housing	17.5%
10. Lack of child care	12.3%
11. Lack of long term supports	10.5%
12. Lack of qualified service providers	7.0%
13. Disability benefits	7.0%
14. Health/physical limitations	7.0%
15. Lack of adequate or inadequate medical care/medical insurance	5.3%
16. Language/cultural barriers	3.5%
17. TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families)	3.0%
18. Lack of available vocational rehabilitation services	1.8%

14. In general, how do you rate your skills in working with DVR participants?

Excellent	49.1%
Good	49.1%
Poor	1.8%
Adequate	0.0%
Fair	0.0%

15. What might help you provide better services to DVR participants?

1. Faster processing/less time between the various stages of the process
2. Hire more staff
3. Decrease the amount of paperwork/increase time spent in the field
4. Increase SWAP's understanding of the DVR processes/available services
5. Increased communication/collaboration between DVR and the schools
6. Increased training on specific disabilities
7. Increased networking opportunities

16. Please tell us how DVR can improve the services we provide to youth with disabilities to help them get or keep a job.

1. Move faster
2. More communication/involve SWAP in staff meetings to stay abreast of changes
3. Hire more staff/fill positions more quickly
4. Transportation assistance for youth
5. Be more flexible/creative in working with youth
6. Train DVR counselors how to approach or communication more effectively with youth
7. More one-on-one time spent with youth/more frequent check-ins with youth
8. Increased training opportunities for youth

17. Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements regarding your satisfaction.

Statement	Response	Response rate
My experience working with DVR is good.	Strongly agree	48.2%
Overall, DVR staff communicate in a timely manner.	Strongly agree	48.2%
Overall, I am satisfied with the relationship I have with DVR.	Strongly agree	45.5%
Overall, the DVR staff are a resource for me.	Strongly agree	44.6%
Rehabilitation counselors monitor services to participants	Agree	64.3%
DVR policies are helpful for providing services for consumers	Agree	63.2%
Rehabilitation staff provide training to and participate in technical assistance to SWAP sites.	Agree	58.9%
DVR counselors are trained to work with SWAP.	Agree	57.9%
Rehabilitation counselor participate with the participant and SWAP staff to coordinate necessary services.	Agree	57.%
Local rehabilitation offices work cooperatively with the school district or BOCES/BOCS.	Agree	52.6%
DVR participates in on-site monitoring activities for SWAP.	Agree	51.8%
Rehabilitation counselors write the IPE in collaboration with the district staffing team.	Agree	50.9%

Statement	Response	Response rate
Rehabilitation counselors determine eligibility of participants referred for SWAP in a timely manner.	Agree	46.4%
Overall, I am satisfied with the relationship I have with DVR.	Agree	45.5%
Overall, the DVR staff are a resource for me.	Agree	44.6%

18. Please tell us anything else you think we should know for setting goals and priorities for improving the services we provide to youth with disabilities to help them get or keep a job.

1. Increased training for DVR staff on how to work with SWAP

2. Expediting the eligibility, IPE (and all steps) of the process

3. Joint trainings/collaboration between all partners (DVR, SWAP, schools...)

4. Hire more staff/fill open counselor positions more quickly

5. Increased networking opportunities

6. Schools doing more with youth in the school in regards to job prep

7. Educate schools better about SWAP services

8. Increase relationships with employers

9. Increase work experiences for youth

7. General Vendor Survey

This survey was sent to all vendors with email addresses in our system (3,674). The purpose of this survey was to obtain information about vendor satisfaction, barriers to working with DVR, how to improve vendor relationships and how to improve services provided to DVR consumers. The survey was open for completion for two weeks and there were 390 responses for a response rate of 10.62%.

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. What type of agency do you work for?

Self employed/independent	49.7%
Other	17.9%
Educational institution	15.9%
Health organization	8.2%
Mental health center	4.1%
Workforce center	1.5%
Advocacy organization	1.0%
Community Centered Board	1.0%
Independent Living Center	0.5%

2. What services do you provide to DVR consumers?

Physical/mental restoration	21.3%
Evaluation and diagnostic services	19.5%
Educational services	18.5%
Vocational training	17.4%
Assessment (situational assessment, vocational assessment)	15.6%
Job coaching	15.6%
On the job training	13.6%
Assistive technology services	11.5%
Job seeking skills training	11.5%
Job placement services	10.0%
Self employment information/services	10.0%
Adjustment training (personal adjustment training, work adjustment training...)	8.7%
Specialized services for the Blind, Deaf, Deaf/Blind	6.4%
Supportive services (transportation, personal assistant services...)	6.4%
Post employment services	5.6%
Homemaker services	1.5%

3. In what geographic areas do you provide services to DVR consumers?

Front Range (Not Denver Metro)	41.8%
Denver Metro	39.0%
Western Slope	28.2%
Mountains	20.8%
Eastern Plains	13.1%

4. Are you willing to travel to other locations to provide services to DVR consumers?

No	50.5%
Yes	49.5%

5. if you are willing to travel to other locations to provide services to DVR consumers, how far are you willing to travel?

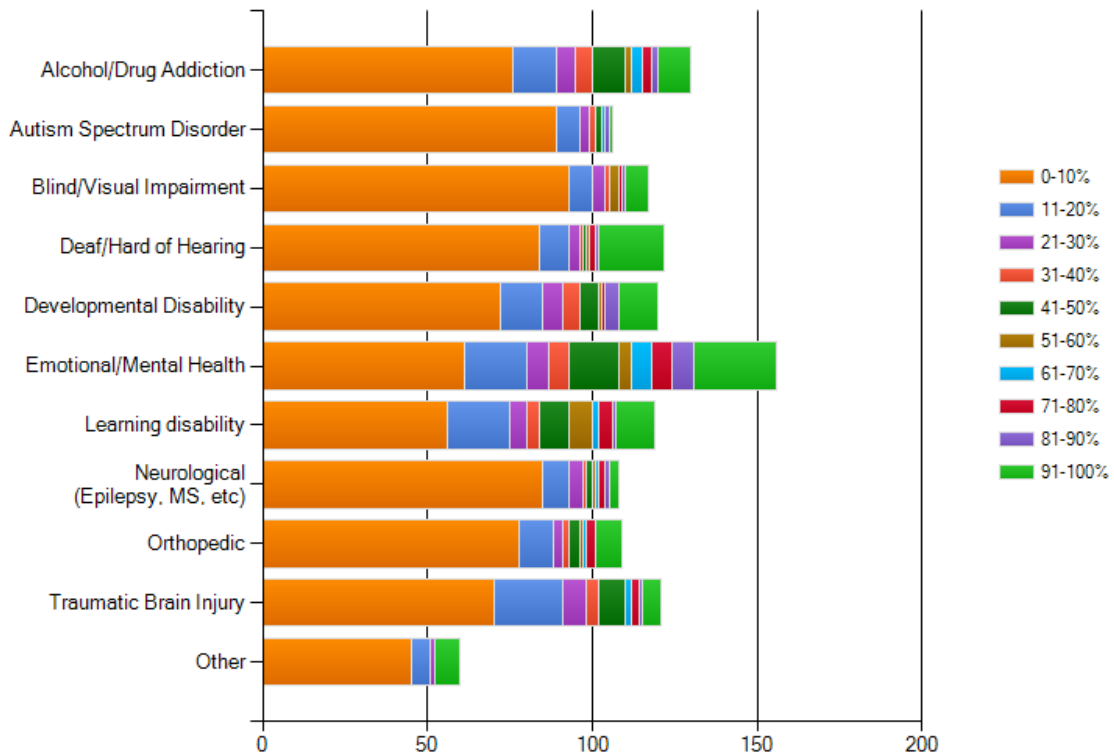
More than 60 miles	46.6%
46-60 miles	17.6%
16-30 miles	16.0%
31-45 miles	13.7%
0-15 miles	6.1%

6. What percentage of your overall client base are DVR consumers?

% of Client base who are DVR consumers	Response rate
1-20%	10.3%
0%	10.3%
81-100%	9.9%
21-40%	5.6%
41-60%	2.2%
61-80%	1.7%

7. Please estimate the percentage of DVR consumers that you work with that have the following disability as their primary disability. (Answers reflect the most common responses.)

Please estimate the percentage of DVR consumers that you work with that have the following disability as their primary disability. (Please select only one answer per row. Total should equal 100%.)



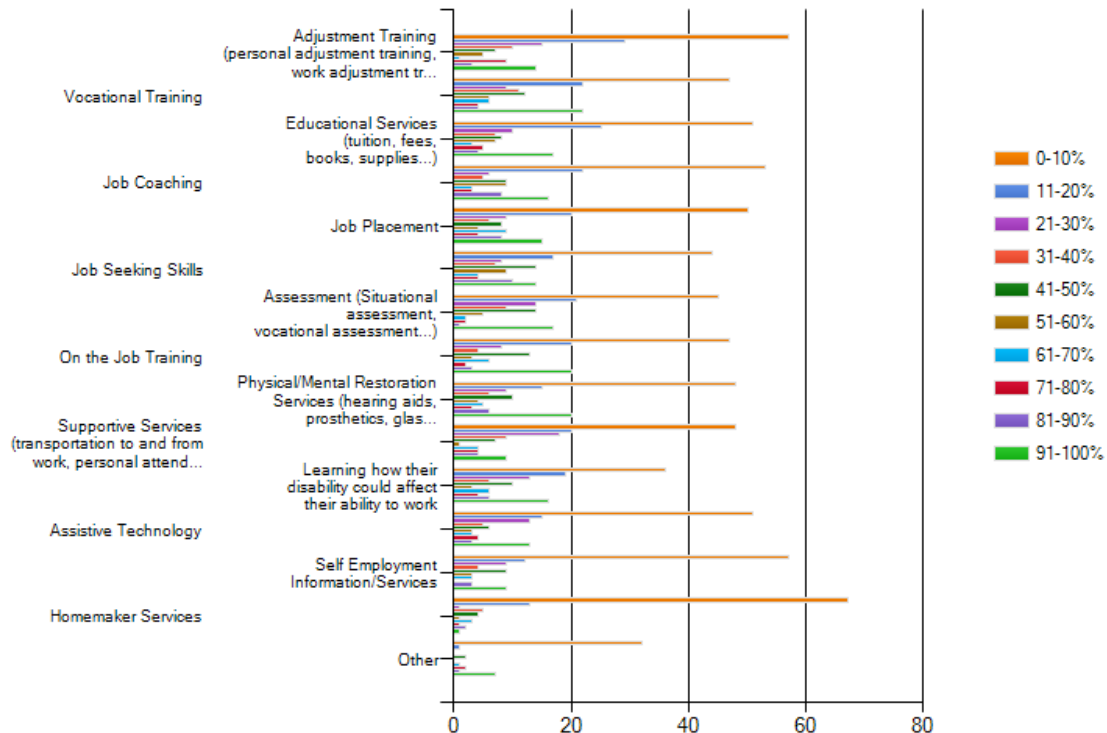
- Emotional/mental health
- Learning disability
- Traumatic Brain injury
- Alcohol/drug addiction
- Developmental disability
- Deaf/hard of hearing
- Orthopedic
- Neurological
- Blind/visual impairment
- Autism spectrum disorder

8. If the consumers you are working with have multiple disabilities, please indicate the disability that makes it hardest for them to get or keep a job or live independently.

Emotional/mental health	22.0%
No other disabilities	17.7%
Alcohol/drug addictions	12.9%
Developmental disability	12.0%
Traumatic brain injury	8.1%
Deaf/hard of hearing	7.2%
Blind/visual impairment	6.2%
Learning disability	5.7%
Orthopedic	4.3%
Neurological	3.3%
Autism spectrum disorder	0.5%

9. Besides the services that you directly provide to DVR consumers, please estimate the percentage of consumers you have worked with who also needed or would have benefited from these other services. (Answers below reflect most common responses.)

Besides the services that you directly provide to DVR consumers, please estimate the percentage of consumers you have worked with who also needed or would have benefited from these other services. (Please select only one answer per row. Total should equal 100%..)



1. Learning how their disability can affect their ability to work

2. Vocational training

3. Job seeking skills training

4. Assessment (situational/vocational)

5. Educational services

6. On the job training

7. Job placement
8. Adjustment training (personal, work adjustment)
9. Physical/mental restoration
10. Supportive services

10. Are there other services (not listed in the above question) that you have provided to DVR consumers that they have needed to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently?

1. Emotional help/counseling
2. Self employment services
3. Referral to other services/programs
4. Assistive technology
5. Socialization skills
6. Intervention with employer
7. Life skills
8. Translation/interpreting services
9. Advocacy assistance

11. Are there other services that you feel DVR consumers need to successfully get and keep a job and/or live independently that DVR does not provide at this time?

1. Emotional counseling/psychotherapy
2. Self employment services
3. Follow up from DVR counselor
4. Money management/budgeting skills
5. List of services DVR provides
6. Basic computer skills training

12. Of the DVR consumers you have worked with/are working with, please estimate how prepared they have been to participate in job seeking activities.

Somewhat prepared	50.4%
Somewhat unprepared	20.7%
Very prepared	19.8%
Not prepared	9.1%

13. What did your orientation to becoming a vendor for DVR services include when you originally signed up to provide services?

W-9 and Vendor registration packet	53.0%
DVR staff took time to meet with me	45.7%
Fee schedule/payment information of DVR services you were applying to become a vendor for	41.8%
Definitions of DVR services you were applying to become a vendor for	38.8%
Definitions of provider qualifications for DVR services you were applying to become a vendor for	37.5%
Directed to DVR website for information	22.8%
None of the above	15.1%
Power Point presentation	5.2%

14. Did you feel you had a good understanding of your responsibilities as a vendor when you completed the paperwork to become a vendor?

Yes	87.1%
No	12.9%

15. What else could DVR have provided or done as part of an orientation to becoming a DVR vendor to help you feel you had a clear understanding of what the process would be and/or what would be expected of you?

1. Tell me how to connect with consumers, how I can get more referrals, and how I can sell my services

2. What do I need to do to get paid? (provide sample invoices or explanation of requirements to get paid)

3. Follow up/return phone calls

4. Better orientation so I have clearer idea of expectations of me and I have a better clarity of fee and payment policies and regulations

5. Process payments faster

6. Provide me training or information on how to do the job/provide the services I am signing up for

7. Have vendors present at staff meetings

8. Yearly refresher of vendor process, fees, expectations...

9. Explain PERA/tax/insurance requirements to me

16. On average, how often do you communicate with the DVR counselor?

Less than once a month	53.0%
Once a month	24.6%
Once a week	9.1%
Once every other week	6.5%
More than once a week	6.9%

17. Please indicate what you feel are the top five barriers to providing services to DVR consumers.

Slow job market/economy	56.9%
Lack of transportation	47.8%
Health/physical limitations	47.0%
Amount of hours they can physically/mentally work	42.2%
Lack of work experience	42.2%
Employer attitudinal barriers	35.8%
Lack of long term supports	34.5%
Other	25.4%
Criminal record	25.0%
Disability benefits	25.0%
Lack of family support	20.3%
Lack of qualified service providers	19.4%
Lack of adequate/inadequate medical care/medical insurance	16.8%
Lack of available rehabilitation services	15.1%
Language/cultural barriers	14.7%
Lack of adequate/stable housing	14.2%
Lack of child care	13.4%

18. In general, how do you rate your skills for working with DVR consumers?

Excellent	59.9%
Good	31.5%
Adequate	7.3%
Fair	1.3%
Poor	0.0%

19. What might help you provide better services to DVR customers?

1. Refer more clients to me or tell me how to promote/sell my services
2. Increased communication between DVR/vendor
3. More time or hours to provide services
4. Training on job placement and how to work with employers, job leads, help developing situational assessments
5. Increased communication between consumer and vendor
6. More work ready, motivated consumers; leverage or consequences for those that are not
7. Training on what DVR is and what you do
8. Increased funding for DVR

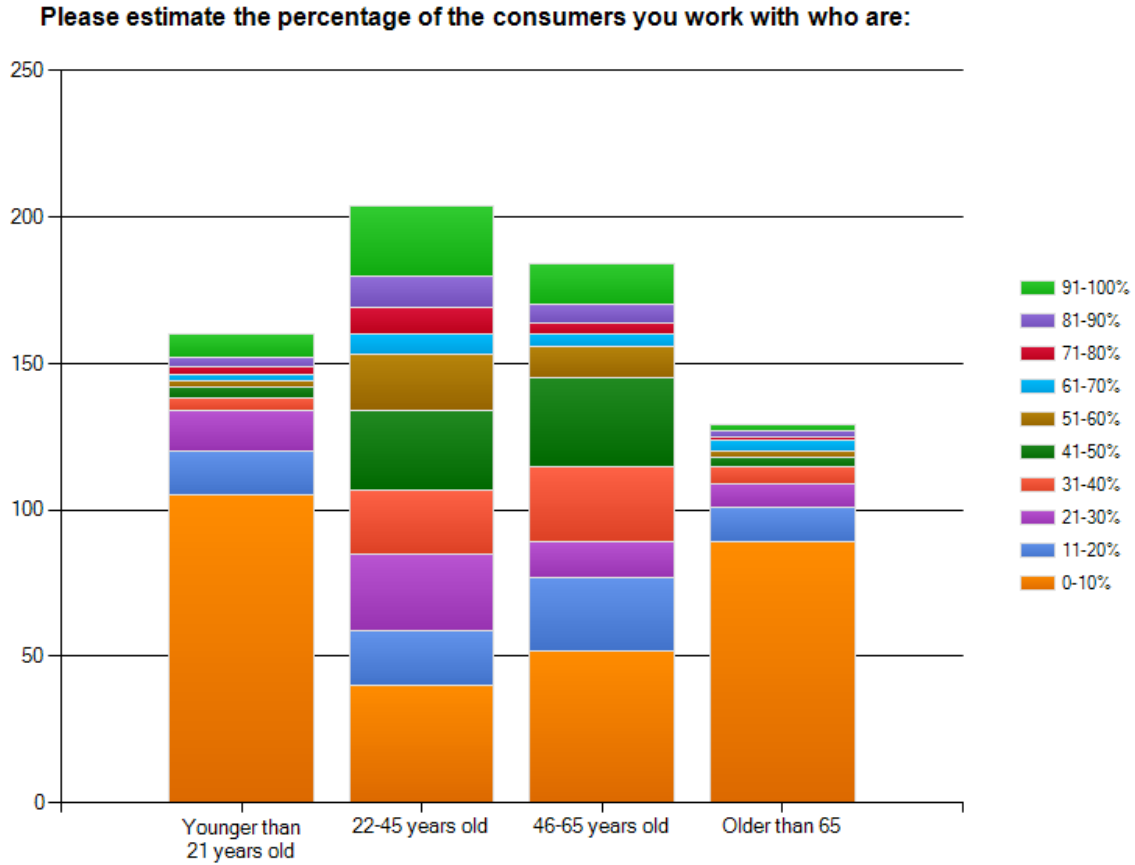
20. Please tell us how DVR can improve the services we provide to persons with disabilities to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently.

1. Increase the amount of contact with and support for clients
2. Increase follow up between consumer and vendor
3. Hire more counselors/decrease caseload sizes
4. Increase communication with client and vendor
5. Be timelier (all aspects of process, in communication...)
6. Increased understanding of consumers needs
7. Increase in consumer motivation and commitment to process (more work ready clients)
8. Make it more of a team process
9. Provide more counseling/therapy to consumers
10. Provide a longer period of follow along or set up natural supports for consumers at worksite

21. Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements regarding your satisfaction.

Statement	Response	Response rate
Overall, DVR staff treat me with respect and courtesy	Strongly agree	72.9%
My experience working with DVR is good.	Strongly agree	65.5%
Overall, I am satisfied with the relationship I have with DVR.	Strongly agree	53.9%
Overall, DVR staff communicate in a timely manner.	Strongly agree	50.9%
DVR policies are helpful for providing services for consumers.	Strongly agree	50.0%
Overall, the DVR staff are a resource for me.	Strongly agree	45.0%

22. Please estimate the percentage of the consumers you work with who are the following ages.
 (Answers indicate highest average responses.)



1. 22-45 years old
2. 46-65 years old
3. Younger than 21 years old
4. Older than 65 years old

23. Please tell us anything else you think we should know for setting goals and priorities for providing services.

1. Refer more consumers to me

2. Increase communication/follow up

3. Hire more staff/decrease caseload sizes

4. Increase education to employers

5. Encourage consumers to be more active/motivated/committed to their job goals/job search

6. Be more flexible/creative in helping consumers

8. Placement Vendor Survey

This survey was sent to a) 216 vendors with email addresses and b) 620 vendors via their mailing address. The purpose of the placement vendor survey was to find out if there are ways to improve quality employment outcomes for consumers and to improve number and quality of placement providers by finding out what is working well in these partnerships, what barriers might exist, and what changes could be made to improve working relationships. The survey was open for completion for two weeks and there were 37 responses for a response rate of 4.4%

A summary of the results of this survey are as follows:

1. What services are you approved to provide for DVR consumers?

Job coaching	81.1%
Job placement/development	67.6%
Personal adjustment training	62.2%
Situational assessment	59.5%
Job seeking skills training	56.8%
Job placement supplies/resume writing	54.1%
Work adjustment training	51.4%
Job club	10.8%

2. How many years have you worked as a contracted vendor to provide job placement related services for DVR consumers?

Less than 1 year	40.5%
1-3 years	27.0%
More than 10 years	16.2%
4-6 years	10.8%
7-10 years	5.4%

- Briefly describe what experience you had working with people with disabilities prior to becoming a vendor for DVR.

Most respondents indicated they had worked with one specific disability group (i.e. teacher for the deaf, worked in mental health services, special education teacher, worked in CCB, etc). Four vendors indicated no experience working with people with disabilities.

- Before becoming a vendor with DVR, what education or training did you have related to the field of job development, job placement, and job retention services for people with disabilities?

1. Master's degree in related field	10
2. "Other" training	7
3. None	7
4. On the job training	4
5. Bachelor's degree	3

- Briefly describe what previous work experience you had in the field of job placement for persons with disabilities before you became a DVR vendor.

1. No experience
2. Job coaching/placement in previous job
3. School setting/working with youth
4. Mental health services
5. Worked at CCB or with DD services

6. What geographic area do you provide services to DVR consumers?

Denver Metro	59.5%
Front Range (Not Denver Metro)	32.4%
Mountains	16.2%
Western Slope	13.5%
Eastern Plains	5.4%

7. Are you willing to travel to other locations to provide services to DVR consumers?

Yes	54.1%
No	45.9%

8. If you are willing to travel to other locations to provide services to DVR consumers, how far are you willing to travel?

31-45 miles	30.0%
46-60 miles	30.0%
Over 100 miles	25.0%
16-30 miles	10.0%
60-100 miles	5.0%

9. Do you specialize in working with people with specific disabilities?

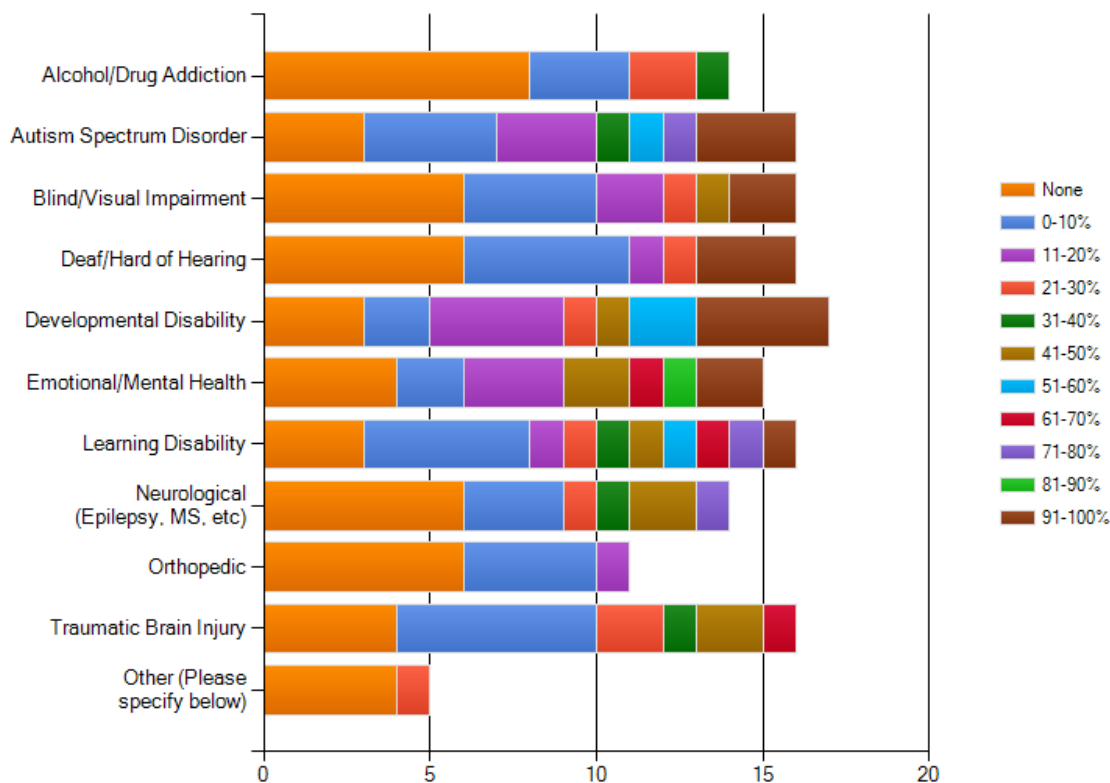
Yes	56.8%
No	43.2%

10. If you answered yes to the question above, please list those specialties.

Developmental disabilities	8
Blind/visual impairment	5
Deaf/hard of hearing	3
Mental health	3
Autism Spectrum disorder	2
Traumatic Brain Injury	2

11. What percentage of your time is spent working with people with the following disabilities?
 (Answers below indicate responses indicated most frequently.)

What percentage of your time is spent working with people with the following disabilities? (Please select only one answer per row. Total should equal 100%.)



1. Developmental disabilities

2. Learning disability

3. Traumatic brain injury

4. Autism spectrum disorder

5. Emotional/mental health

12. Are you willing to work with people with criminal backgrounds?

Yes	45.0%
Some, depending on the charges	40.0%
No	15.0%

13. If you answered "some, depending on the charges", please indicate which types of charges/convictions would lead to a job placement referral denial.

1. Sex offenses
2. Violent crimes
3. Felonies

14. Are you fluent in sign language or a foreign language?

No	85.0%
Yes	15.0%

15. If you answered yes to the question above, please indicate the language you are fluent in.

Sign language

16. On average, how many hours do you spend per consumer on job development activities that result in a consumer being hired?

40-60 hours	33.3%
0-10 hours	27.8%
20-40 hours	16.7%
10-20 hours	11.1%
60-100 hours	11.1%
Over 100 hours	0.0%

17. Please indicate what you feel are the five biggest barriers you face to providing quality employment outcomes for DVR consumers.

Consumer's "readiness" to work	83.3%
Economy	83.3%
Lack of work experience	66.7%
Employer attitudinal barriers	61.1%
Poor job seeking skills training	50.0%
Severity of consumer needs	38.9%
Job placement reimbursement rates	33.3%
Criminal backgrounds/convictions	27.8%
Transportation issues	27.8%
Communication with the consumer	16.7%
Communication with the DVR counselor	5.6%
Timeliness of payments	5.6%

18. Please indicate the top three things that you feel would help you increase your quality of placements?

Collaboration with other placement entities (workforce centers, Business Outreach Specialists...)	83.3%
More "work ready" referrals	83.3%
Disability awareness training for employers	77.8%
Higher number of referrals from DVR counselors	33.3%
Improved communication with DVR counselor	11.1%
Smaller caseload	11.1%

19. How often do you feel a DVR counselor and job placement vendor should communicate?

Once every other week	38.9%
Once a week	27.8%
Once a month	27.8%
More than once a week	5.6%
Less than once a month	0.0%

20. What did your orientation include when you signed up as a DVR vendor?

W-9 and Vendor registration packet	61.1%
Definitions of DVR services you were applying to become a vendor for	50.0%
Fee schedule/payment information for DVR services you were applying to become a vendor for	50.0%
None of the above	38.9%
Definitions of provider qualifications for DVR services you were applying to become a vendor for	33.3%
Directed to DVR website for information	22.2%
DVR staff took time to meet with me	22.2%
Power Point introduction	5.6%

21. What else might have been helpful to you when you signed up to provide DVR services/

1. Increased communication about the process, expectations, reports needed
2. Help with job leads, how to do the job, training
3. Job ready clients
4. Meet regularly with DVR counselor to work together
5. More information about the consumers disability
6. Review of services approved for
7. Orientation

22. Do you share job leads with DVR when you do not have a candidate for an open position?

Yes	55.6%
Sometimes	33.3%
No	11.1%

23. Do you receive job leads from DVR staff?

Yes	33.3%
No	38.9%
Sometimes	27.8%

24. Do the job placement professionals (DVR, Workforce Center Staff, School to Work Alliance Staff, private job developers and other placement entities) in your local area coordinate and collaborate on employer outreach and placement?

Sometimes	44.4%
No	38.9%
Yes	16.7%

25. If you answered yes or sometimes to the above questions, please describe how the placement professionals in your area coordinate and collaborate on employer outreach and placement.

1. Phone calls
2. Meetings
3. Computer/email/sharing of resources
4. Employment groups
5. They don't

26. What are the primary reasons that some individuals you place lose their jobs?

1. Work habits/worth ethic (attendance, attitude, accountability, motivation, immaturity...)
2. Social skills
3. Communication barriers
4. Inadequate job match/lack of customized employment
5. Economy
6. Not able to continue job coaching
7. Disability worsens
8. Family issues interfere

27. What is working well for you in partnering with DVR in providing services for our consumers?

1. Relationship/rapport with DVR counselor
2. Communication with DVR
3. Enjoy the work
4. Specialized training (vendor and DVR)
5. Pay
6. Job coaching
7. Persistence

28. What suggestions do you have as to how DVR can better partner with vendors?

1. Increase rates to be more competitive
2. Increased communication regarding consumers status
3. Increased ability to get information about DVR services to vendors
4. More job availability
5. More work ready consumers
6. Be more patient/understanding and supportive
7. Decrease clients wait time for services

DVR's efforts to sustain a consistent and comprehensive approach to its planned three year "rolling" assessment have been impacted by a variety of factors, most notably the intensive undertaking by the agency to utilize ARRA funding to purchase, adapt, customize, train and implement a comprehensive electronic case management system. This project has required the time and energy of a multitude of DVR staff, including management personnel, and has in part, required DVR to use all of the information it has gathered through a variety of assessment activities to ensure the finished system addresses the needs of a diverse population of individuals across the state with disabilities as well as the staff using the system to effectively deliver rehabilitation services.

The CO-AWARE system was implemented statewide on May 2, 2011, after three weeks of intensive training conducted with all DVR staff across Colorado. The CO-AWARE system replaces all of DVR's previous data systems, including an archaic mainframe system from which DVR previously produced all required federal reports. Now that the system has been successfully implemented, DVR will focus on thoroughly learning and taking advantage of the robust data analysis capabilities available in CO-AWARE and will explore the role it can play in the effective conduct of future CSNA activities.

Another recent factor that has impacted DVR's CSNA activities relates to staff resources and turnover within the agency. The responsibility for the CSNA and state planning activities has been organizationally relocated to a different unit within the agency due to staff retirements. In conjunction with this reorganization, DVR planned to establish a specific position with dedicated responsibility for CSNA, state planning activities and supplemental program evaluation

activities; a position that would coordinate closely with DVR's current quality assurance and training staff and efforts. Departmental hiring freezes and layoffs in other divisions within the Department delayed DVR's efforts to fill this position.

Consequently, this position was not filled until mid January of this year (2012), leaving the new staff member five months to learn the job, conduct the full Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, and complete all state plan attachments. Due to time constraints, it was determined that the surveys completed (as described above) would be the most efficient way to reach the most people and elicit the most feedback given the timeframe it needed to be completed in.

Given all of these circumstances, DVR plans to begin incorporating a wider variety of assessment tools and a more inclusive range of information gathering activities to reach the largest amount of people as possible. In addition, DVR will begin looking at which methods would be most effective in increasing response rates, especially from those populations in which smaller response rates were seen this year. DVR is committed to identifying strategies that will effectively inform the agency regarding its ongoing efforts to provide the highest quality vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible Coloradoans with disabilities who strive to achieve successful employment.

Rehabilitation Needs of:

a) individual's with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services

- *individual job placement for people with developmental disabilities
- *job placement/job coaching in rural areas
- *natural supports on the job for individuals
- *ongoing/long term/extended supports for people without funding (individuals with mental illness not associated or working with a mental health center, people with developmental disabilities on DD wait list, individuals with traumatic brain injuries, and most significant with physical disabilities...)
- *customized supported employment options
- *transportation resources, especially in rural areas or those who do not qualify for Access A Ride
- *training needed for job development providers, especially those working with people with mental health issues

b) individual's with disabilities who are minorities

- *training to staff in multicultural awareness
- *transportation resources

- *outreach and availability of VR services to inform and recruit potential eligible consumers
- *service providers
- *education about/referral for available disability benefits

c) individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program

- *outreach regarding availability of VR services to potential referral sources and agencies to inform and recruit potential eligible consumers
- *education to employers about benefits of hiring consumers
- *long term supports for persons with autism, TBI, mental health, persons on wait lists for other agencies
- *transportation
- *referrals/resources for medical services

c) individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system

- *increased partnerships and collaborative relationships with workforce investment system
- *disability awareness training for workforce center staff
- *continue to expand partnerships and encourage coordination of services
- *employer and public education about the ability of persons with disabilities

2) need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state

- *increase vocational services in rural areas
- *explore ways to work with mental health centers who do not provide supported employment, but may be able to provide ongoing/extended support for consumers
- *development of more community based alternatives

Other needs indicated across all surveys by all respondents included:

- lack of work experience
- timelier/faster services/quicker movement through the process
- better follow through/follow up with consumers in all stages of process, reach out to consumers instead of them reaching out to you
- more one on one help with paperwork, forms, job search
- more educational and/or training opportunities
- learning how disability affects ability to work
- gauging "readiness" for work
- more help with finding job goal to fit needs
- develop more relationships with employers willing to hire people with disabilities
- basic computer skill training
- paid work experience
- job seeking/job club/networking opportunities
- information about local job markets
- on the job training
- life skills, social skills, problem solving skills, organization skills
- better assessment of abilities
- disability awareness training for employers
- advocacy/advocacy training

- referrals to other programs
- employer and public education about the ability of persons with disabilities
- overcoming health and functional limitation barriers
- benefits assistance, understanding and access/referral to
- motivation and readiness to work

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (b)

Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

FY 2013

Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

DVR currently has all priority categories open and has no waiting lists for services. It is anticipated that the number of individuals applying for services in the upcoming year will continue to rise as the economic situation in Colorado continues to be unpredictable. DVR estimates the increase will be approximately 5% over current year applications.

The following charts show the projected numbers of individuals DVR anticipates serving in FFY 2013 and the numbers of individuals anticipated to receive eligibility determinations in FFY 2013.

INDIVIDUALS SERVED AND THE COST OF SERVICES BY PRIORITY CATEGORY*
Projected October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013

	Individuals Served	Cost of Services
Individuals with most significant disabilities	12,349	\$13,012,303
Individuals with significant disabilities	6,358	\$6,989,030
Individuals with least significant disabilities	1,566	\$1,378,277
TOTALS	20,273	\$ 21,379,610

*This does not include the funds paid for DVR's SWAP program.

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES
BY PRIORITY CATEGORY
Projected October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013

	Eligible Individuals	Cost of Services for Eligible Individuals
Individuals with most significant disabilities	4,474	\$4,615,114
Individuals with significant disabilities	2,311	\$2,950,881
Individuals with least significant disabilities	452	\$1,065,311
TOTALS	7,237	\$8,631,306

Title I and Title VI-B Funds

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 uses both Title VI-B funds and Title I funds for this purpose.

When Title VI-B funds are not available, DVR uses Title I funds to assure that supported employment services are not interrupted. 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.

- Total number of individuals to be served using Title VI-B funds for supported employment – 657
- Total cost of services for individuals to be served using Title VI-B funds for supported employment - \$675,216

Individuals To Be Served and the Cost of Services By Priority Category*

Projected October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013

- Number of individuals with most significant disabilities to be served – 12,349
- Cost of services for individuals with most significant disabilities to be served - \$13,012,303
- Number of individuals with significant disabilities to be served – 6,358
- Cost of services for individuals with significant disabilities to be served - \$6,989,030
- Number of individuals with least significant disabilities to be served – 1,566
- Cost of services for individuals with least significant disabilities to be served - \$1,378,277
- Total number of individuals to be served – 20,273
- Total cost of services for individuals to be served - \$21,379,610*

*This does not include the funds paid for DVR's SWAP program.

Number of Individuals Who Will Be Eligible For Services By Priority Category

Projected October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013

- Number of eligible individuals with most significant disabilities – 4,474
- Cost of services for eligible individuals with most significant disabilities - \$ 4,615,114
- Number of eligible individuals with significant disabilities – 2,311
- Cost of services for eligible individuals with significant disabilities - \$2,950,881
- Number of eligible individuals with least significant disabilities – 452
- Cost of services for eligible individuals with least significant disabilities - \$1,065,311
- Total number of eligible individuals – 7,237
- Total cost of services for eligible individuals - \$8,631,306

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c)(1)

State's Goals and Priorities

FY 2013

State's Goals and Priorities

Based on continued 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 the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) internal needs, DVR collaborated with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) throughout FFY 2012 to validate and continue the following long term priorities and goals for the vocational rehabilitation program.

Due to the rare circumstances of Colorado DVR having four top management positions become vacant this past year, there has been a focus on filling these positions and reorganizing the management structure. In addition, filling these vacancies from within existing DVR staff left other vacancies in regional supervisory positions, and then consequently counselor vacancies. Consequently, work on goals and strategies of FY 2012 state plan was interrupted several times over the last year due to these staff changes.

Many positive strategies were started or implemented but not carried out to the extent desired. DVR and the SRC felt that the previous goals and work begun on them was important and needed to continue now that staffing issues have stabilized. Thus, many of FY 2013 goals, priorities and strategies are similar and DVR is eager to begin working towards these.

Goal #1 - Increase the number of successful employment outcomes for DVR consumers

Measure:

- 1) By September 2013, DVR will increase the number of successful employment outcomes by 2% over previous year.
- 2) Decrease consumers' dependence on public assistance

Ongoing Strategies:

- a) Further analyze CSNA surveys to look at high producing, high quality counselor's processes and approaches
- b) Better analyze labor market and industry trends and educate staff and consumers regarding findings
- c) Educate counselors on use of CO-AWARE resources to more effectively manage caseloads for successful outcomes
- d) Continue to provide foundational education and training for DVR staff, including coding accuracy in CO-AWARE
- e) All DVR staff have employment outcomes as a measureable core competency in performance plans
- f) Establish guiding principles for the job placement process
- g) Analyze data related to Standard & Indicator 1.6 - Self Support

Goal #2 – Increase the visibility and public awareness of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Measure:

Establish a baseline and track the number of formal outreach and educational activities conducted by DVR staff to employers, partners, and other community members

Ongoing Strategies:

- a) Utilize the new Work Supports and Employer Engagement Unit to coordinate the work of Business Outreach Specialists regarding coordination of education and awareness activities completed by other staff
- b) Conduct series of legislative and educational open houses across the state
- c) Continue to enhance the functionality of the DVR website and ensure it provides current and appropriate information and educate staff, consumers and partners about the availability of the DVR website
- d) Explore the use of social media resources to increase visibility and awareness of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Goal #3 – Improve the experience of DVR consumers as they move through the rehabilitation process toward successful employment outcomes

Measure:

Consumer satisfaction as measured by consumer surveys, focus groups and other forms of customer feedback to establish a baseline and show an increase in customer satisfaction

On-going Strategies:

- a) Conduct focus groups and key informant interviews with DVR consumers and partners to gain feedback and discover what keeps people engaged and moving to successful employment outcomes
- b) Improve DVR processes from customer's perspective
- c) Analyze CSNA surveys to determine common themes and trends around service quality
- d) Continue work of vendor committee focused on identifying and addressing vendor issues identified by staff, consumers and vendors to improve the overall quality of vendor services
- e) Examine strategies to increase consumer engagement

Goal #4 – Create an environment within DVR that is conducive to maintaining a full and competent staff.

Measure:

- 1) Staff retention as indicated by ratio of filled to vacant FTE's
- 2) Analysis of staff satisfaction surveys and employee engagement survey results

On-going Strategies:

- a) DVR regions will explore progressive solutions to implementing cross-training and team approaches to service provision and processes
- b) DVR will continue to analyze opportunities and implement solutions for expanding various job classifications within DVR (rehabilitation counselor series, rehabilitation technician series, VRT/OM series, Business Outreach Specialists series and other promotional opportunities for effective DVR staff)
- c) DVR will implement an effective approach to conducting exit interviews with staff who are leaving the agency
- d) DVR will continue to identify and provide staff development opportunities to all DVR service delivery staff, especially newer rehabilitation counselors
- e) New supervisors within DVR will receive training on creating a retention culture

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c)(3)

Order of Selection

FY 2013

Order of Selection

The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) implemented an Order of Selection on March 1, 1993 in anticipation of projected economic and funding difficulties, to ensure DVR's ability to manage limited funds, and to guarantee continuity and fairness in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to persons eligible for VR services. This action resulted from increased costs for vocational rehabilitation services, increased demand for services, an increased numbers of applicants with significant disabilities, and Colorado DVR to match all available Federal funds. However, since Order of Selection was implemented, DVR has had to restrict services only 3 times.

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 most significant disabilities

SECOND: Eligible individuals with significant disabilities

THIRD: Eligible individuals with a disability that does not meet the criteria of Most Significant Disability or Significant Disability.

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

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 severe impairment(s) in order to attain an employment outcome, and
- It will take a minimum of **five (5) months** to complete the services.

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 **two or fewer** 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.

The most recent service restriction occurred in the fall of 2008 when, due to severe overall resource constraints, DVR activated waiting lists under Order of Selection, with a restriction on all three priority category levels. Subsequent to this, DVR committed to using \$2.8 million of ARRA funding to remove consumers from the wait list. In April, 2009, DVR began removing consumers with most significant disabilities from the wait list, based on the earliest application dates. In May 2010 DVR was able to remove all remaining consumers off the Wait List and opened all priority categories.

DVR has worked diligently to identify and utilize effective mechanisms for tracking and projecting encumbrances and expenditures in a way that will allow the Division to effectively manage Order of Selection implementation decisions. At the current time, DVR anticipates having sufficient human and fiscal resources to continue to serve eligible individuals without enacting waiting lists into the foreseeable future.

Priority Category	# of Individuals to be Served	Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of services
Most significant	12,008	1,438	3,616	3-5 Years	\$11,857,841.16
Significant	6,175	767	1,866	2-4 Years	\$6,478,057.50
Other	1,519	191	821	0-3 years	\$1,317,311.18

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c)(4)

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

FY 2013

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.)

DVR's administrative priority is to assure the provision of supported employment services to all who need it. DVR's new electronic case management system provides the utility to ensure that Title VI-B funding is the primary source of payment for supported employment service until that funding is exhausted, at which point funding continues to be provided through Title I.

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 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.

Wellness and Recovery for Thousands through Employment and Education (WRKE)

The Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) was awarded a five year grant in the fall of 2010 by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) to provide evidence based supported employment and education to participants of the Mental Health Center of Denver, Jefferson Mental Health, and Metal Health Partners serving Boulder and Broomfield Counties. The programs serve transition age youth and adults jointly with local DVR counselors in these areas. Job seeking skills, job placement, and job coaching are provided through the grant at no additional charge to DVR. The Omni Institute is conducting an ongoing assessment of the program.

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. 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. The activities to be conducted during 2013 reflect a continuation and refinement of activities performed over the last several years.

ATTACHMENT 4.11 (d)

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

FY 2013

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

FY 2013 Update

DVR completed its comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) this year. Eight surveys were created and distributed to DVR participants, staff, stakeholders, vendors and other DVR partners. The following is an updated list of DVR's goals and strategies and the various tasks DVR will undertake as a result of the findings in the CSNA.

Goal #1

Increase the number of successful employment outcomes for DVR consumers

On-going strategies:

- DVR will increase the number of successful employment outcomes by 2% over the previous year.
- DVR will decrease consumers' dependence on public assistance.
- DVR will further analyze CSNA surveys to look at high producing, high quality counselor's processes and approaches
- DVR will better analyze labor market and industry trends and educate staff and consumers regarding findings
- DVR will educate counselors on use of CO-AWARE resources to more effectively manage caseloads for successful outcomes
- DVR will continue to provide foundational education and training for DVR staff, including coding accuracy in CO-AWARE
- DVR has assigned all DVR staff employment outcomes as a measureable core competency on performance plans
- DVR will establish guiding principles for the job placement process
- DVR will analyze data related to Standard & Indicator 1.6 - Self Support

Associated tasks:

- DVR will review and capitalize on information received from a) CSNA survey to consumers actively seeking employment and b) CSNA survey to counselors with high production/high quality outcomes, sharing ideas and providing training on common themes found within these surveys
- DVR will continue to be forward thinking to effectively identify current and future employment trends across Colorado to educate counselor and consumers about these trends
- DVR will strengthen their Business Outreach Specialist program and utilize DVR's newly established Work Supports and Employer Engagement Unit to effectively increase employment outcomes statewide. Business Outreach Specialists and other staff will continue their efforts to reach out to and develop solid relationships with area employers through education and formal and informal presentations.
- DVR has implemented a statewide core competency as a part of each staff member's performance plan targeted to increase employment outcomes for DVR participants.

Goal #2

Increase the visibility and public awareness of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

On-going strategies:

- DVR will establish a baseline and track the number of formal outreach and educational activities conducted by DVR staff to employers, partners, and other community members
- DVR will utilize the new Work Supports and Employer Engagement Unit to coordinate the work of Business Outreach Specialists regarding coordination of education and awareness activities completed by other staff
- DVR will conduct series of legislative and educational open houses across the state
- DVR will continue to enhance the functionality of the DVR website and ensure it provides current and appropriate information and educate staff, consumers and partners about the availability of the DVR website
- DVR will explore the use of social media resources to increase visibility and awareness of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Associated tasks:

- The Federal Business Outreach Specialist continues to network with human resources staff throughout the Federal Center and within the various federal agencies, such as The Bureau of Reclamation, The Bureau of Land Management, US Geological Society and US Fish and Wildlife Services to educate and encourage use of Schedule A hiring efforts and to promote hiring of persons with disabilities. In addition, he continues to provide Disability Awareness Trainings to potential employers and cooperatively works to create and host job fairs at the federal level.
- In the coming months, DVR open house events are planned for a number of offices in addition to employer education events in connection with October's Disability Employment Awareness Month. DVR will continue to have MIG resources through December 31, 2012. DVR, through the MIG, has been a sponsor of the national "Think Beyond the Label" campaign.

- The State Rehabilitation Council and DVR leadership will continue to identify and implement activities and events to educate partner state agencies, legislative staff and members, and other community partners and stakeholders.
- DVR Business Outreach Specialists and other staff will continue to serve as members on various human resource associations, as part of local workforce center boards, as liaisons with various agencies, such as the Community Centered Boards, Veteran's Administration, local mental health agencies, local school districts, etc.

Goal #3

Improve the experience of DVR consumers as they move through the rehabilitation process toward successful employment outcomes

On-going strategies:

- DVR will improve consumer satisfaction as measured by consumer surveys, focus groups and other forms of customer feedback to establish baseline and show an increase in customer satisfaction
- DVR will conduct focus groups and key informant interviews with DVR consumers and partners to gain feedback and discover what keeps people engaged and moving to successful employment outcomes
- DVR will improve DVR processes from customer's prospective
- DVR will analyze CSNA surveys to determine common themes and trends around service quality
- DVR will continue the work of the vendor committee focused on identifying and addressing vendor issues identified by staff, consumers and vendors to improve the overall quality of vendor services
- DVR will examine strategies to increase consumer engagement

Associated tasks:

- DVR's Vendor Committee continues to meet regularly to work on vendor and fee schedule issues that impact services to consumers. Work is currently focused on
 - a) job placement services and rates,
 - b) vendor orientation, and
 - c) defining what "quality" means, what qualifications vendors should have and how to measure quality. Other areas the committee will continue work on are the Fee Schedule, new rates for resume preparation, implementation of paid work experience as a new service for participants and Agribility. Lastly, a job placement pilot project will start in August 2012 to determine if new milestone payments will work.

- DVR identified counselors who have had consistently high production over the last several years, as well as those with high quality casework as identified through the quality assurance review process. A survey was sent to these staff as part of the CSNA. DVR will analyze data obtained from this survey to look for common themes and patterns. The information gleaned from this group will be analyzed and shared among all staff for potential replication of best practices, thus improving the quality of services to DVR participants.
- DVR will examine opportunities to hold focus groups with participants who exited the DVR system prior to implementation of an IPE to discuss what barriers they feel they faced, what the reasons were that they exited services, and what they feel would have helped keep them engaged in DVR services.

Goal #4

Create an environment within DVR that is conducive to maintaining a full and competent staff.

On-going strategies:

- DVR will increase staff retention as indicated by ratio of filled to vacant FTE's
- DVR will analyze staff satisfaction surveys and employee engagement survey results to determine strategies to improve working conditions to be more conducive to maintaining staff
- DVR regions will explore progressive solutions to implementing cross-training and team approaches to service provision and processes
- DVR will continue to analyze opportunities and implement solutions for expanding various job classifications within DVR (rehabilitation counselor series, rehabilitation technician series, VRT/OM series, Business Outreach Specialists series and other promotional opportunities for effective DVR staff)

Associated tasks:

- DVR has been examining options for incentives or pay adjustment for hard to fill locales/positions and areas with higher costs of living. The State of Colorado completed an Employee Engagement Survey and DVR is looking at these survey results to determine how the information can be useful as it pertains to DVR staff. In addition, DVR is creating its own Employee Engagement work group to identify why staff leaves DVR, what might encourage them to stay, etc.
- DVR recognizes that staff morale has suffered due to the lack of raises and increase in costs of benefits over the last several years. Due to this, DVR is exploring options to improve morale and find ways to encourage staff to want to continue working with the agency. DVR is working with human resources to try and expand the rehabilitation counselor series to allow for more upward mobility opportunities for staff who wish to advance to a more responsible position as a rehabilitation counselor without moving into supervisory positions. In addition, DVR is working to create a rehabilitation technician position which would allow advancement/career path options for administrative staff.

This position would also give rehabilitation counselors more time to spend with their consumers in the hopes of keeping consumers more engaged in services and providing overall higher quality services to consumers and consequently increased and improved employment outcomes.

- DVR has recently filled an internal human resource position. A main focus of this position will be to conduct exit interviews with staff to learn more about reasons staff are departing and to find out what incentives may have increased their decision to remain with the agency. DVR will then examine the findings of the exit surveys and explore strategies to keep employees engaged, motivated and eager to stay with the agency.
- DVR will examine ways to decrease caseload sizes or workloads to allow counselors to spend more one-on-one time with each consumer's. DVR will also examine ways to assist staff in reducing stress.
- DVR also conducted a statewide staff survey this year to identify not only training needs, but to solicit information from staff about factors that contribute to their continued satisfactory employment here at DVR so the agency can further explore how to replicate those types of conditions and environments.

Other strategies used to support innovation and expansion include:

*Developing and implementing an "Accessible Document Training". This training will teach staff how to make sure documents are accessible for everyone.

*CO-AWARE, our new case management system, has been live for a little over a year now. Staff will be provided advanced training to learn additional features to allow them to work more efficiently and effectively, allowing them to serve consumers better. In addition, CDVR is upgrading the employer module of the AWARE system. This module will expand DVR's reach to more employers. DVR staff will be able to track and monitor employers, enter job openings, and track when participants apply for posted job openings in the system. In addition, staff will be able to search for people based on their IPE goals to match them with job openings.

In addition, DVR has been provided the opportunity to work with a national consultant who assists government programs in examining their processes in order to improve their services.

The consultant is assisting DVR in determining what barriers participants encounter at various stages of the DVR process. The goal is to reduce, or eliminate identified barriers.

This work will expand on the findings of the CSNA and will help DVR identify additional barriers participants might encounter. DVR is excited about this opportunity as we feel it supports goal 3 above, "to improve the experience of DVR consumers as they move through the rehabilitation process toward successful employment outcomes".

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 2013

Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities

Throughout FFY 2012, The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has made progress toward identified goals and priorities by utilizing various strategies. Additionally, the agency has also responded to various challenges, not specifically identified in previously stated goals and priorities and continues to serve all eligible individuals. However, there has been unprecedented turnover in DVR's management staff, with six of the agency's top management staff retiring in the past eighteen months. This provided an opportunity to reorganize the management team and regional breakdown, promoting greater efficiency. The division has worked hard to fill all vacancies with qualified individuals and was able to do so by promoting from within. This created several vacancies among district supervisor positions, as well rehabilitation counselor positions

DVR efforts have been focused on re-building its management staff at all levels and providing training to persons in these positions so they will be well prepared to assist consumers toward their employment goals. In addition, all DVR staff have begun utilizing the division's new electronic case management system, CO-AWARE, which was implemented on May 2, 2011. While this represented a significant change in how staff do business, all staff have been diligent in learning, understanding and being able to fully manipulate this system in the most efficient manner.

GOAL #1: Increase the Number and Quality of Employment Outcomes

Strategy A: Identify, explore and replicate effective practices that are employed by exemplary counselors.

- During new counselor training, staff utilize previous work done around promising practices. New counselors are provided with information about “*Qualities of Effective VR Counselors*”, case management strategies based on previous focus groups and current caseloads of successful counselors, and time management strategies to enhance their ability to manage the multiple priorities VR counselors deal with daily. There has been discussion about identifying current exemplary counselors to begin a new focus group and gather some of the current strategies used.
- One of the surveys for this years’ comprehensive statewide needs assessment was targeted to counselors identified with high production/high quality work. Data was pulled from the CO-AWARE system to identify counselors who consistently exceeded production goals over the last five years, as well as counselors whose work was deemed as high quality as a result of previous quality assurance results.

These counselors were then surveyed and asked questions about patterns, tips, techniques, etc. that they use to identify what is consistently being done that assists counselors in obtaining successful outcomes. The goal is to now take the information learned and share it with other staff and/or use it to develop training to present to staff to help others increase their performance. In addition, DVR continues to use its quality assurance case review process to identify cases that represent best practices across the rehabilitation process and to use these as training examples for other staff.

- Exemplary counselors are employed as Mentor/Trainer Counselor II's who then train new staff and existing staff about best practices, enhancing the quality of services and employment outcomes and to encourage ongoing focus of "employment".
- The northeast district set a goal to improve the number of successful closures and accomplished this by restructuring the Business Outreach Specialist job duties to specifically target rural employers, creating many more positive employment relationships throughout their district. In addition, their staff worked closely with their local workforce center to design plans to do a better job matching job openings for participants. These activities included helping with job clubs and attending regular monthly interagency collaboration meetings. In addition, counselors focused more effort on outcomes, tracking and adjusting service delivery to improve employment outcomes. This plan was so effective that they have chosen to continue to build on their success by promoting their partnership by expanding the job club to two other workforce centers and in starting a job club in a county where none has existed before. In addition, counselors are using strategies they learned from the Cognitive Motivational Training to make sure participants stay engaged and motivated.
- The Northeast district supervisor prints a monthly production report for each counselor and monitors the flow of participants through the rehab process to ensure there are no roadblocks to the flow. The supervisor in cooperation with the lead mentor/trainer counselor has developed a plan to provide routine and focused training for counselors who get "stuck" at different points in the rehab process. The mentor/trainer counselor in this region has a performance objective to impact the number of successfully rehabilitated closures for chronically low producing counselors in the district.
- DVR counselors are being trained to do a thorough comprehensive assessment to ensure quality employment outcomes.

Strategy B: Continue to monitor caseload activity data and implement effective strategies to improve service delivery for consumers.

- One strategy that DVR utilized to improve service delivery for customers was completion of various customer satisfaction surveys. Surveys were provided to all DVR offices to be left in the reception area and/or to be given to participants requesting input about their satisfaction. In addition, this same survey was posted on the DVR website for participants and stakeholders to complete. DVR also sent out a general customer satisfaction survey to participants with open cases as well as an additional survey to consumers actively looking for work. Results of these surveys can be found in Attachment 4.11(a).
- DVR has invested in providing Cognitive Motivational Training (CMT) to its DVR counselors. DVR plans to use its quality assurance process as one way of identifying counselors using various CMT techniques and to monitor their effectiveness. Strategies identified as successful will then be shared with other staff and trainings will be developed as needed to encourage wider use of these approaches.
- DVR has also provided training to six individuals to become Motivational Enhancement Training (MET) facilitators in hopes of finding ways to keep consumers engaged in DVR services. 65 DVR participants have completed the MET program since it began in March 2011, with the following results:
 - 3 individuals (5%) have been closed rehabilitated. An additional 4 individuals (6%) are currently working and will achieve 90 days of employment soon.
 - 7 individuals (11%) elected to have their case with VR closed, recognizing they were not ready or interested in pursuing work. An additional 6 individuals (9%) have had their case with VR closed for various other reasons (e.g. moved, unable to contact, failure to cooperate, etc.)
 - 19 individuals (29%) have continued with services, 5 of whom are actively seeking employment (8% of all MET participants). The remaining 14 are developing plans or engaged with other services necessary to eventually achieve employment.
 - 11 individuals (17%) continue to have open cases, but have not been making progress toward their employment goal and will continue to be monitored.

These results show promise that the use of motivational interviewing techniques can be successful in helping participants identify the benefits of working or not working and can

help them determine what they may need in order to be successful in their employment pursuits.

- DVR staff have been using the new CO-AWARE case management system for a little over a year now. Staff are becoming more cognizant of the various types of reports available in this system to help them monitor their own caseloads, watch for “activities due”, help them keep track of eligibility and plan time frames, number of individuals in each status, etc. In addition, supervisors are also learning what types of reports they can utilize to assist their staff in enhancing service delivery and achievement of employment outcomes.

Strategy C: Continue to conduct employer outreach and education.

- DVR is an active partner in the implementation of Colorado’s Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), which operates through 12/31/12. A key component of the MIG has been to connect, communicate and coordinate with employers to build Colorado’s employment infrastructure and to remove barriers that keep business and qualified applicants with disabilities apart. To this end, and led by the DVR Business Outreach Specialists, DVR offices throughout Colorado created and hosted local community-based employer events. These events provided education and information about employing persons with disabilities. In addition, they have also connected job-seekers and potential employers, brought together employers for the purpose of education and outreach, and focused on federal employers and federal contractors. The DVR statewide Business Outreach Program will continue connecting with employers in the future by hosting outreach and education events.
- A Business Outreach Specialist who works primarily with individuals who are blind has begun assisting her participants in creating videos of themselves completing job tasks associated with the types of work they are pursuing. She reports that she found some employers were hesitant to hire her consumers as they could not visualize or imagine how an individual who is blind could do the job. These videos can be uploaded to YouTube with the link indicated on the participants resume or application directing employers to their video. An example of this is a participant who is blind who is seeking employment as a floral designer. Potential employers can go to her video to see how she is able to complete the functions of this type of job.

- The Federal Business Outreach Specialist has been working with local federal agencies to promote student employment programs. The first of these programs is The Workforce Recruitment Program which is a database of college students with disabilities. Employers can browse the database when filling positions to hire summer and permanent positions. Another program is the Student Educational Program, which provides federal internship opportunities for students.

Other progress towards this goal includes:

- Staff across the state are reaching out to the high schools to identify students who have a disability, but may not have an IEP. Some efforts toward this include scheduling meetings with school counselors, school nurses, audiologists, and other staff who may work with these students to educate them about DVR services.

GOAL # 2: Increase the visibility and public awareness of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, by increasing the number of public outreach activities

Strategy A: Educate Colorado State Agencies, Legislators and other community members about DVR's employment focused services and benefits to Colorado.

- The Federal Business Outreach Specialist presented at a Disability Employment Awareness Month Event at the Denver Federal Center. This event was hosted by the Bureau of Reclamation and several agencies within the Department of the Interior were in attendance. This presentation included training approximately 75 people, including federal employers and job seekers about Schedule A hiring practices. Following the presentation, job seekers were given the opportunity to meet with representatives from various federal agencies, including Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Geological Society and US Fish and Wildlife Services.
- Region I hosted an open house in which Colorado state agencies as well as a County Commissioner were educated about individuals with disabilities, the DVR mission, and DVR's employment focused services and benefits to Colorado.
- In the Northeast district, the supervisor and Business Outreach Specialist are members of the local workforce board meetings and interdisciplinary meetings. As well, they work

closely with the local social services representatives. In addition, each counselor in this district is assigned as a liaison with a specific major agency, such as the Community Center Board, the Veteran's Administration, the local mental health agency, the local school district, etc. Having these specific liaisons enhances communication, helps develop better relationships and provides for smoother flow of services to participants.

- Many of DVR's Business Outreach Specialists and other staff are actively involved in various networking opportunities where they are able to talk about DVR's mission, services and employment focus. Some examples of this include:
 - Staff members are working with Colorado's Department of Human Services to try and implement hiring processes to fill state positions by using hiring practices similar to the Federal Schedule A letter
 - Presentations to and membership in various Human Resource associations, such as the Society of Human Resource Professionals and Colorado Association of Non-Profits
 - Serving as members of transition teams across the state
 - Staff serving as members on Workforce Investment Boards
 - Attending Ex-Offender/Department Of Corrections meetings monthly with other local community organizations to discuss job opportunities, employers and issues pertaining to offenders
 - Staff are providing Disability Awareness Trainings to both employers and community partners across the state
 - Staff are serving on various networking groups such as the Community Resource Network and Chamber of Commerce

Strategy B: Continue to enhance the functionality of the DVR website and ensure it provides current and appropriate information.

- DVR continues to update its website to ensure information is current and accurate. The website contains an "Introduction to DVR Services Video", DVR success stories, links for participants, partners and employers, current news and resource information,

information about associated councils and boards as well as links to office locations and other resources. The website can also be used as a place to post announcements.

- Region I adapted the Pueblo DVR orientation video to make it applicable statewide and added captioning and ASL interpretation for accessibility. The video was then used on the DVR website, increasing the functionality and currency of the website.
- DVR has provided vendor resource materials on the DVR website to provide easily accessible information and guidance to vendors.
- The Medicaid Infrastructure Grant, through stakeholder-driven employment initiatives, is working to address the needs of youth with disabilities and has chosen to utilize DVR's website as one means of doing this. The planned webpage for youth has been remarkably expanded and will be more of a full web resource with multiple categories and subcategories. Content is now in the final stage, and once web design is complete, the MIG will market the resource through school district staff, parent centers, etc.

Strategy C: Enhance the quality of DVR's outreach strategy and materials for employers.

- DVR completed its marketing plan and the development of the DVR specific brand marketing tools. Staff have been educated about these materials and they are now available for use when outreaching to employers.

In addition, DVR continues to utilize numerous other ways to outreach to employers, including:

- Staff have completed multiple Disability Awareness Training events increasing the visibility and public awareness of DVR, as well as educating participants about individuals with disabilities.
- Business Outreach Specialists across the state have increased the number of employer contacts and outreach throughout the past year.
- DVR staff have also reached out to employers in their area to identify employees with disabilities who could benefit from support to maintain their existing employment.
- Offices throughout the state are partnering with local agencies to conduct job fairs, resource fairs and other events, increasing opportunities for employment for participants

while also educating more employers about DVR services and gaining more public awareness through increased visibility.

GOAL #3: Improve the quality of providers from whom DVR purchases services

Strategy A: DVR will develop and conduct an on-going consumer survey to measure the quality of services provided by DVR vendors.

- DVR has been conducting ongoing surveys in order to determine the best ways to improve the quality of providers and services to DVR participants.
 - a) The first of these surveys was a Provider Relations survey sent October of 2010 to internal staff about the efficiencies of registering vendors and general vendor issues. The biggest outcome from this survey was that DVR was able to reduce the time it takes to register a new vendor from 6-10 days to 1-2 days.
 - b) The next survey was a Vendor Quality survey, also sent to internal staff in June of 2011 to rate vendor quality, identify main areas of concern, finding vendors, and fee schedule issues. The most important outcome of this survey was identifying job placement as a #1 concern, which then helped structure Vendor Committee priorities.
 - c) A job placement vendor survey was sent in November 2011 to internal staff to ask specifically about reports and communication with vendors. The outcome has helped DVR to define what a quality vendor is.
 - d) In March of 2012, two surveys were sent to vendors as part of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment. The first of these surveys was sent to all DVR vendors to identify what was working well in partnering with DVR and what they thought could be done differently to improve relationships with DVR. The second of these surveys was sent to vendors providing placement services to DVR participants.

The goal was to determine what barriers were impeding their ability to find DVR participants' jobs, what might help them increase the number of employment outcomes they assist individuals in getting, and what might help improve the

quality of the employment outcomes obtained. These results are talked about further in attachment 4.11(a).

- e) The most recent survey sent out by the Operations Support Unit was to members of the Vendor committee in June 2012. This survey asked members about the structure of meetings, what's working, and what is not in order to determine ways to improve effectiveness of the committee. Results of this survey are still pending.
- f) DVR will continue to look at other mechanisms for gathering feedback about the quality of services received by our consumers and are considering options such as focus groups and key informant interviews in order to have more face-to-face interaction/feedback.

Strategy B: DVR will review and update provider standards and qualifications.

- A subcommittee of the DVR vendor committee (see below) is currently trying to determine what a “quality” vendor is. In doing so, they are reviewing provider standards and qualifications for various services to determine the minimum qualifications providers need to meet. They continue to meet on a regular basis and will make recommendations for appropriate changes to the Rehabilitation Leadership team.

Strategy C: DVR will review and refine procedures for recruitment and registering of providers.

- DVR established a Vendor Committee in August 2011. The purpose of the committee is to
 - a) utilize DVR staff throughout Colorado to effectively determine rates and standards for goods and services that vendors provide and,
 - b) to be proactive, address concerns by staff and vendors, and improve the overall quality of vendors for DVR.

This committee is comprised of staff members from all job classifications from each region of the state and includes administrative assistants, counselors, and

supervisors. Meetings are held quarterly, unless it's deemed that more frequent meetings are needed. Members received input from all DVR staff regarding vendor issues and fee schedule issues and then prioritized these by importance of need.

Sub committees were then developed and have been meeting in between the regularly scheduled quarterly meetings to work on issues such as

- a) job placement services and rates,
- b) vendor orientation, and
- c) defining what "quality" means, what qualifications vendors should have and how to measure quality.

Other areas the committee has focused on have been updating the Fee Schedule, new rates for resume preparation, implementation of paid work experience as a new service for participants and Agribility. Lastly, a job placement pilot project will start in August 2012 to determine if new milestone payments will work.

- Region I presented two Provider Orientation trainings to vendors to increase the awareness of DVR expectations in terms of the quality of services and outcomes.
- The Operations Support Unit will be providing various training sessions for DVR staff over the next several months. Topics will include Fee Schedule, Vendor Registration form and process, corporate accounts, vendor module in AWARE, and job placement information. The training will vary and be a collaborative effort with the AWARE team, the Vendor Committee, and the DVR training team. These meetings will be Go-To meetings/training and offer the opportunity to discuss any changes and answer questions from around the state.
- The Northeast district was noticing difficulty getting consistent quality services from vocational vendors in their area and also struggled with having a good selection of medical providers. The supervisor worked with staff to identify, recruit and register additional medical providers and have met with their local vocational service providers to train and enhance the quality of the services and reports they have been providing.
- DVR created a new process to streamline and improve the timeliness of the vendor registration process. This along with how the new AWARE system has standardized the

authorization process has greatly improved the ability of counselors to work efficiently and effectively with vendors and participants.

GOAL #4: Create an environment within DVR that is conducive to maintaining a full and competent staff

Strategy A: DVR will reinitiate the request to expand the job classification series for rehabilitation counselors.

- DVR continues to work with human resources to look at different options and possibilities for career advancement opportunities for rehabilitation counselors who wish to remain with the agency, but who are not necessarily interested in becoming supervisors. Previous concepts included expanding the classifications within the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor series. This proposal stalled due to turnover within the Colorado Department of Human Resources (CDHS) human resources unit and turnover within DVR's management team. Now that staffing issues have been resolved, this will become a high priority for DVR to focus on this coming year.
- DVR also created a job description for a Rehab Tech position, which is currently being reviewed by human resources staff. Research of other states utilizing this position showed that having these positions was helpful in improving consumer engagement and also allowed rehabilitation counselors more time to focus on their areas of expertise when meeting with consumers, such as counseling and guidance and movement toward successful employment outcomes. In addition, these positions will allow support staff increased career path options.

Strategy B: DVR will research and implement an effective approach to conducting exit interviews with staff who are leaving the agency.

- Due to the turnover in staff and the number of staff vacancies, DVR did not have an opportunity to begin implementing this strategy. DVR has recently filled an internal human resource position and a major focus of this position will be to conduct exit interviews with staff who are leaving the agency. Goals of the exit surveys will be to

identify reasons staff are leaving (other than retirement) and to inquire about what would increase staff's desire to stay with the agency.

Strategy C: DVR will conduct a needs assessment survey and continue to identify and provide skill development opportunities for staff.

- DVR completed a small scale needs assessment in preparation of its statewide conference asking all staff what training opportunities they felt they needed or would like to see. In addition, DVR supervisors were surveyed to determine what they felt their staff could most benefit from. Breakout sessions at the statewide conference were developed to meet the needs identified in the surveys. Ongoing staff trainings are being developed and expanded in a more formal fashion.
- Region I Supervisors conducted needs assessments among DVR staff to determine skill development needs, and implemented training to address those needs through in-services and new counselor training.

Other progress towards this goal includes:

- The Northeast district struggled in previous years in finding qualified applicants that were residents of Colorado and who wanted to work in a rural setting. Two things happened within the past year and a half that have made a huge difference. Human Resources allowed an out of state waiver to recruit more qualified applicants for RC positions, thus increasing the pool of applicants for all open positions. The second factor was collaboration with our in-state university, the University of Northern Colorado, to recruit and train more qualified rehabilitation counselors. As a result, DVR has been able to recruit skilled interns and hire counselors to fill vacancies who have the motivation, skills and education to provide the quality customer service needed, as well as staff who choose to work and live in a rural environment.
- Some of the other changes made to help recruit and maintain skilled staff include more flexibility with flex schedules, the approval of a flex place option, better communication from administration about promotional opportunities and a variety of valuable and relevant training opportunities.

- With the amount of turnover in management staff and the number of new people in these positions, there has been a focus on providing solid training to all levels of new staff. Regional supervisors are in the process of completing the Emerging Leaders training in Washington. A new training process, in addition to mentoring, has been put in place for all new district supervisors, as well as an on-line supervisor handbook has been created for easy reference.

Innovation and Expansion Activities

Use of Title I Funds for FFY 2012 Innovation and Expansion Activities

Total expenditures of Title I funds for innovation and expansion activities for Federal FY 2012 were as follows:

Support of the State Rehabilitation Council	\$ 15,693
Support of the State Independent Living Council	\$ 46,602

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 FFY 2013 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 uses both Title VI-B funds and Title I funds for this purpose. When Title VI-B funds are not available, DVR uses Title I funds to assure that supported employment services are not interrupted. 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.

Progress on Standards and Indicators

Below, please see chart showing DVR's progress on required Standards and Indicators for FFY 2011, the last complete fiscal year. (Please note that these results are final but still preliminary as we continue to wait on the BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics) to finalize their average state wage data.)

STANDARD 1	REQUIRED	RESULT
Indicator 1.1 - Change in Employment Outcomes	>= 0	+1114 (This FFY 2011: 2349) (Last FFY: 1235)
Indicator 1.2 - Percentage of Post-IPE Closures that are Successful Employment Outcomes	55.8%	53.9%
Indicator 1.3 - Percentage of Successful Employment Outcomes that are in Competitive Employment	72.6%	93.8%
Indicator 1.4 - Percentage of Successful Competitive Employment Outcomes that are for Persons with Significant Disabilities	62.4%	92.2%
Indicator 1.5 - Average Hourly Wage for All Successful Competitive Employment Outcomes vs. the Average Hourly Wage for all Colorado Workers	52.0%	50.0% (Based on Average CO Wage of \$23.76 and Min Wage of \$7.25)
Indicator 1.6 - For Successful Competitive Outcomes, the Percentage whose Primary Support is Own Income at Application vs. at Closure	53.0%	51.6%
STANDARD 2	REQUIRED	RESULT
Indicator 2.1 - Percentage of All Closures – Persons from Minority Backgrounds vs. Persons from Non-minority Backgrounds	80.0%	88.7%

ATTACHMENT 6.3

Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services

FY 2013

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 (see service definitions at end of document) 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.

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.

DVR's required documentation 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 strive 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 the Division of Behavioral Health 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.

DVR, the Division for Developmental Disabilities (DDD), and the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) have created an environment, through collaborative policy development and innovative funding initiatives, which encourages local provider agencies to enhance existing supported employment services. These efforts continue through cooperative agreements between DVR and DBH to expand and develop methods to provide effective supported employment services to mutual consumers. DVR is also working on obtaining a new cooperative agreement with the Division of Developmental Disabilities towards these goals.

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. 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.

Supported Employment Services

Applicant

An individual who submits an application for vocational rehabilitation services in accordance with section 5.12 of the DVR Policy Manual. (located at <http://dvrcolorado.com/partners.php>)

Competitive Employment

Full or part time work in the competitive labor market, in an integrated setting, for which compensation is at or above the customary wage and benefits paid by the employer to persons who do not have disabilities for the same or similar jobs. Compensation, in the absence of an appropriate waiver, must reflect at least minimum wage.

Eligible Individual

An applicant for vocational rehabilitation services who meets the eligibility requirements of section 6.1 of the DVR Policy Manual. (located at <http://dvrcolorado.com/partners.php>)

Extended Services

Ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment and that are provided by a State agency, a private non-profit organization, employer or any other appropriate resource after transition from support provided by DVR. The funding must come from providers other than DVR. The federal guidelines indicate that contact by the extended support provider be made with the employer and the employee at least twice a month to monitor job stability. If under special circumstances, especially at the request of the consumer, the IPE provides for off-site monitoring through twice monthly meetings with the individual.

Facility-Based Services

Services provided in structures or environments designed specifically to furnish goods and services to persons with disabilities and other special populations, such as community rehabilitation program facilities, clubhouses, independent living centers, special residential facilities, extended employment sites, segregated enclave program sites, etc.

Functional Capacity Area

Set of life activities or skills in which the ability to function is significant to successful independence and/or employment. Eight such areas have been identified for purposes of severity of disability: mobility, motor skills, interpersonal skills, communication, work tolerance, work skills, self-care and self-direction.

Individual with a Most Significant Disability

An individual with a most significant disability has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits at least one factor in three or more functional capacity areas (mobility, motor skills, interpersonal skills, communication, work tolerance, work skills, self-care and self-direction) in terms of an employment outcome; and, whose successful vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require the provision of two or more core vocational rehabilitation services for at least five months.

Integrated Settings

- Integrated Service Setting

A setting typically found in the community in which the individual with a disability interacts with persons, other than service provider(s), who do not have disabilities.

- Integrated Work Setting

An employment setting typically found in the community in which the individual with a disability interacts with persons who do not have disabilities other than service provider(s), to the same extent as persons who do not have disabilities in comparable positions.

Job Coaching

Training provided by an individual, other than the employer (unless under a program of natural supports in a supported employment placement), to an eligible individual after he/she has been placed in a paid employment situation. Job coaching services include job skill training at the work site, work site orientation, monitoring of the individual at the job site to assess employment stability and coordination or provision of specific services at or away from the work site to maintain employment stability.

Job Seeking Skills Training

Training to teach eligible individuals how to conduct job searches, how to prepare resumes and complete applications, and how to interview effectively.

Job Shadowing

A community-based situational assessment provided in a real work setting where the eligible individual observes and possibly assists in the performance of a specific job so that he/she has a sufficient understanding of job requirements to assist when making an informed choice among potential employment outcomes.

Job Site Evaluation

A limited situational assessment (up to three hours) which consists of observing an individual with a disability on a specific job to determine if the job and/or work setting is appropriate for the individual and/or to determine accommodations that may be needed.

Job Placement

Job placement services are services to help an individual obtain suitable, stable, and satisfactory employment in an integrated setting which is consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. Job placement services include the provision of individualized job search assistance, assistance in completing work applications and arranging for interviews, on site job analysis, on site consultation with employers, recommendations for work –site job modifications, and orientation to the work place, as appropriate to the individual's specific needs.

Job Stability

When an employed individual is reasonably expected to continue to perform all job duties acceptably without the provision of further, vocational rehabilitation services.

Personal Adjustment Training

Training provided to help eligible individuals develop compensatory skills and/or to adjust behavior in the areas of independent living, communications, homemaking, personal mobility and ability to travel in the community, and personal functioning. It includes rehabilitation teaching services and mobility training for individuals who are visually impaired, blind or deaf-blind.

Physical and Mental Impairment

Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or, any mental or psychological disorder such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific learning disabilities.

Placement Bonus

The placement bonus is paid to the approved vendor when a consumer is successfully closed rehabilitated through the Program. Each of the following conditions must be met: (1) Placement represents competitive employment in an integrated community setting; (2) The consumer and the vocational rehabilitation counselor agree that the employment situation is suitable, stable, and satisfactory; Note: A job is considered stable when it is consistent with the vocational goal in the consumer's IPE/amended IPE(s), as well as their strengths, resources, priorities, interests, concerns, abilities, capabilities and informed choice. (3) It is anticipated that the employment will continue.

Post-Employment Services

One or more vocational rehabilitation services that are provided subsequent to the achievement of an employment outcome and that are necessary for an individual to maintain, regain or advance in employment, consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

Priorities and Concerns

For purposes of determining a suitable employment goal, this phrase includes work and personal factors of primary importance to the individual, types of aid and support needed for engaging in work, earnings requirements, matters creating stress for the individual, financial concerns and other factors that are critical to successful participation in a VR program.

Provider

The individual and/or organization which will render a necessary good or service.

Situational Assessment

A type of vocational evaluation conducted to assess work behaviors, interpersonal skills and job-related skill levels for purposes of establishing eligibility or developing and Individualized Plan for Employment. Situational assessments may take place in community-based settings, including real life work settings, or in facility-based settings, such as community rehabilitation program facilities.

Supported Employment Services

Competitive employment in an integrated setting, or employment in an integrated setting in which individuals are working toward competitive employment, consistent with the individuals' strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice with ongoing support services for individuals with the most severe disability.

Time Limited Supported Employment Services

Time limited support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment that are provided by DVR for a period of time not to exceed 18 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the Individualized Plan for Employment.

Transitional Employment

A series of temporary job placements in competitive work in integrated settings with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness. In transitional employment, the provision of ongoing support services must include continuing sequential job placements until job permanency is achieved.

Vendor

A provider to whom the DVR can pay for a particular service.

Weekly Work Goal

An estimate of the maximum number of hours per week which the eligible individual with a most significant disability can work to achieve the identified employment outcome within eighteen (18) months. The weekly work goal must be consistent with the eligible individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

Public Comment on DVR's State Plan

2012

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) values the opinions and feedback from participants, family members, vendors and service providers, stakeholders and other partners it works with. DVR feels the information it receives can only help in improving the services provided to assist persons with disabilities in reaching quality outcomes. This attachment is a compilation of feedback provided to DVR after SRC meetings, after posting the State Goals' and Priorities on the DVR website and from comment sections from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment surveys.

SRC Member Comments

Steve Bell – Colorado Springs

Representative of State Mental Health Planning Council

Elaine:

I hope you find these comments, questions & suggestions helpful.

1) Increase rehabilitation counselor retention:

This is the toughest of the 3 topics to be addressed. So, at the moment, all I have to offer is...questions.

Are there any other incentives besides increased pay that the State can offer to current and prospective counselors? Is this a nationwide problem? What are other states doing to address the situation, and what are the success stories out there?

2) Increase consumer engagement to reduce consumer attrition as evidenced by increased number of implemented IPE's:

Try this:

With the written permission of both parties, have new 'pre-IPE' customers visit with one or more 'closed case' customers first at the office (counselor does introductions and then leaves the room)...to hear from a peer about their current work experience and how DVR played a role in their success. Set up an environment for dialogue to take place. Then, if possible, bring the two people together again at the successful customer's

workplace. Nothing, I believe, can take the place of personal encounters, honest Q & A and to see the counselor truly fulfilling a facilitation role.

What do people love to talk about more than anything else? Themselves and their successes and struggles! In the spirit of choice, some DVR customer may not go for such an approach. Having said that, I believe many 'closed case' customers would jump at the chance to personally help someone who is just starting their journey back to gainful, meaningful employment.

3) Increase successful employment outcomes:

- a. Have trained Para-professional and student interns do some of the work that do not require a degree or certification in VR. Ideally, this could free-up time and energy so the counselors can do more of the things that they are most effective at.*
- b. Hold at least one all-day or half-day vendor workshops for DVR vendors in different parts of Colorado each year to help counselors and vendors learn about and learn from one another. Invite some customers or former customers to participate to give their perspectives as well. My assumption is that DVR can and should foster face to face communication to create opportunities for learning. Successful employment outcomes can enhanced by going past the paperwork or one on one relationships between vendors and counselors (as important as they are)...but see what's working and what's not working...and the how and whys around the state.*

Peace.

--Steve Bell

Colorado Springs

Judi Stein Stutman – Aurora
Representative of Public at Large

Hi Elaine:

I know that we came up with a lot of strategies during the SRC meeting, but recently it has come to my attention of another issue. Goal #1 is about counselor retention. I am aware of the trainings that DVR does for the counselors, but there is a huge influx of students with Autism spectrum disorder coming in for jobs. I think it would be greatly beneficial if there were a series of trainings on Autism, what it is, the different types and how it affects employment. Since most of the students we have at CLE are on the spectrum I would be happy to assist with planning and implementing these trainings. Thanks

Have a great holiday weekend!

CLE is in the News: College Living Experience is Changing Lives

*Judi Stein Stutman
College Living Experience
Assistant Director of Transition Services*

Dear Ms. Desmedt:

Thank you for sending the strategic plan for DVR for review. My comments are from the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (CCDC). CCDC is the largest disability rights organization in Colorado. Our mission is to advocate for social justice for people with all types of disabilities (cross-disability). Our strategies involve advocacy on the individual and systems level along with education of people with disabilities and providers. In our own strategic planning we have come to the conclusion that employment and a move for economic parity must be the next phase of the disability rights movement.

The following stylistic issues should be addressed in a final plan:

- 1) The people who get services should be called one thing, they are called both customers and consumers in this document.
- 2) Write out acronyms or explain jargon the first time it is used (e.g. what is CO-AWARE), etc.
- 3) Timelines would be great--for each strategy outline is this ongoing, something to be done in first year, last year, etc?
- 4) State how often and by whom this plan will be reviewed.

Given that increased the employment and improved education of people with disabilities is essential to economic parity, we are very interested in DVR as DVR is the agency whose mission is solely about assisting people to meet employment goals. We appreciate being included. We have not done a lot of work with DVR to date, but with a new emphasis on employment and education we anticipate greater involvement over the next several years.

We support the goals of the plan, such as increasing employment outcomes, increasing client completion of plans, and staff retention.

We have concerns and questions with some of the stated measures and strategies as follows:

Goal #1: The first measure is terrific, it is clear and has a specific outcome of 2% increased employment outcomes. The second measurement is not appropriate as listed. Not all public assistance is equal and not all is poverty based. For example, for severely disabled consumers (the group that should be the DVR priority) getting off of Medicaid is not often desirable. When the Medicaid buy-in is fully implemented Medicaid will no longer be solely a poverty related program. We do not necessarily want to reduce reliance on Medicaid. DVR itself is a major participant on the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant. On the other hand, food stamps is a pure poverty program and we may want to look at reduced food stamp use or reduced reliance on private food banks as an appropriate measure as that is directly correlated to poverty and earnings. Because we are starting at such a low level both financially and educationally, many disabled individuals will need to stay on several forms of public assistance for some or all of their work life. We do not want a measure like this to cause an incentive to counselors to work with easier clients or penalize those who work with more difficult clients. We would request this measure be modified to only address food stamps or otherwise clarify that simply reducing public assistance is not always appropriate. We are also concerned that the some strategies are too vague and do not allow for specific analysis as their effectiveness. It is good that some involve clear analysis (A,B and G). We like strategies E and F. We do not think strategies that are simply about education without some numbers and strategic outcomes are useful. For example how many counselors will be educated in CO-AWARE

and does education correlate with increased use in all cases? Is there data showing increased use of CO-AWARE means people get more or better jobs?

Goal #2: The goal is good but the measure should be more specific. DVR should measure outreach. Collecting data for a baseline is great. However, DVR should also analyze which outreach efforts are useful and resulting in good referrals. For example, DVR can spend counselor time and energy participating in some community activity. This might result in 20 new referrals a month. If after a year it is determined that out of the 20 new referrals a month only 2-3 are eligible and out of those eligible 90% are not clients that follow through or are serious about employment. This data would show that is not the kind of outreach DVR should do. On the other hand, DVR might spend the same amount of time at another community activity with fewer people and resulting in 5 referrals a month, but throughout a year 4 of the 5 referrals were highly motivated eligible people who are either already employed or actively engaged in a plan. This would be a great use of time, not only for the referrals but the potential of word of mouth amongst a group that was filled with the kind of clientele that would lead to these results. Some measurement tool, even as simple as a Google Docs spreadsheet should be employed for all outreach activities. Finally we hope that all activities involving the website and social media have a clear expectation of full accessibility.

Goal #3: Is there no current baseline? It would be nice to have a timeline by which DVR will establish a baseline followed by a definitive improvement goal by a date certain. The dates and goals should be open to the public. Regarding the strategies DVR should also do a focus group with employers who regularly work with clients newly placed to assess the readiness of clients and helpfulness of DVR with resolving issues. Strategy B is a typo (I think) and should read improve the DVR process from a customer PERSPECTIVE rather than prospective. Moreover, I am not sure if that is really a strategy or the goal?

Goal #4: This is the best written goal, there are clear measurements and strategies show identifiable actions.

State Rehab Council Goals and Strategies:

Overall there are no measurements and the strategies are all vague--explore, discuss, identify, etc.

1) Increase counselor retention: Is there data to show this is a problem? Is counselor turnover high compared to other states? Is this anything that the council has any control over? The strategies seem to be internal to DVR and CDHS management. Does the council have any authority over personnel management? If not this goal is not really appropriate.

2) Increase consumer engagement to reduce attrition: This is a terrific goal. It would be good to have numbers to find out how many consumers do not finish the process and where in the process do they drop out. It is imperative for DVR to define attrition (and if this is done it should accompany reports or documents like this). For example, if a consumer gets a job and keeps it for four months, then loses his or her job and comes back to DVR is that success? Does it matter why the person loses the job? If a consumer takes 5 years

to complete a plan and has to take a few breaks in the process is that attrition after a certain amount of time without a finished plan even if they are still working on the plan? Does finishing a plan always mean that they get a job or just that they are job ready? When they do not finish a plan, does DVR have a sense of how often this is due to non avoidable disability related issues versus clients that were not seriously engaged with the idea of competitive employment? This is a very important issue with many variables. Does DVR study successful former clients to see what they think kept them engaged?

3) Increase successful employment outcomes: From the goal it appears that successful employment outcome is different from an implemented IPE--this is accurate? It appears from this strategy that there is a belief that employment outcomes can be improved by paying closer attention to employer trends and better employer engagement. Is this accurate and if so is there any data to show that customers who are not getting jobs are not getting jobs because they are seeking work in declining industries? If so how is that assessed? Obviously an engaged employer is great and engaged employers who have numerous jobs is even better. Is there something that DVR does that specifically can or should engage an employer and if so has DVR identified what works? Why would you survey customers who are seeking employment rather than those who have successfully obtained employment. Until someone has worked they can only speculate as to why they have not successfully become employed. Again it would be important to know what DVR considers a successful employment outcomes: I know DVR closes a case after 90 days. Is that a successful outcome? Is there a core earning criteria or is it all defined by the individual plan? Is there longitudinal data comparing people with disabilities with long standing work who do and do not participate in DVR and assessing what services the participants received to study what services appear to be most helpful?

Finally I did not see anything here about assuring that there would be adequate representation and outreach to communities of color or any particular disability group. Does this mean that the DVR clientele has a racial and disability mix appropriate to the population of Colorado? I ask because I recall seeing that on other plans.

Again, thank you for sending us this plan for comment. I had not heard of any activities of the SRC for several years so am pleased to know it is still around and functioning. I would also recommend that the rehab council engage the disability community more frequently and more aggressively.

Julie Reiskin, Executive Director
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition

General Website Survey Comment

Please describe your knowledge/understanding of who DVR is and what we do:

- DVR helps individuals with disabilities to train for work and to help them enter or remain in the workforce. DVR also teaches persons with disabilities to live independently by helping them adapt daily activities to their particular disabilities
- It is a federally mandated agency to assist persons with significant functional impairments to return to work; providing funding for assistive devices, educational upgrades, retraining, case management oversight, job development and preparation; and assessments of needs and abilities.
- I am unfamiliar with the DVR.-DVR supports individuals with barriers/disabilities in helping them achieve their employment goals. They serve all disability groups. They augments our MHC employment services with services such as transportation assistance, clothing vouchers, physical assistance with hearing aides, eye glasses, and financial incentives to employers.
- Removing barriers to Employment for people with disabilities.
- You work with individuals with disabilities to help them find work - and all that accompanies that.
- Help people get education to get a career, help people with things that might help them get and keep that career
- DVR helps youth and adults with disabilities to obtain and maintain work. Your website does not give a full description of all services offered.
- Responsible for providing training and support to enable persons with disabilities or persons who become disabled to be employed at competitive wages in community based (not facility based) jobs.
- Assist people with disabilities/people transitioning from corrections/veterans with finding the resources/training/tools they need to become gainfully employed.
- DVR is an agency that helps individuals that are eligible get jobs. They support the individual with assistive tech if needed to get a job. DVR helps find out what the barriers are for a person to help them get a job but they have to want to work.

- Assist people with disabilities or people with vocational needs who receive SSI/SSDI find jobs and help fund some educational opportunities if it will lead to better and lasting employment.
- You are a taxpayer funded service agency that provides a funnel for disabled people to access job training and education to alleviate severe poverty.
- DVR helps people with disabilities secure jobs. They do this by paying for education. Or supplies needed for a job search. They provide counseling and coaching, and just plain motivation. They help people with disabilities set up their own business if this is the most expedient vehicle for the person to earn a living by providing seed money, education, etc.
- DVR provides assistance in helping individuals with disabilities prepare for going to work, obtain, and maintain employment. Services include training, support, and career placement with the goal of helping individuals find meaningful work. This is achieved through partnerships with employers and community vendors.
- DVR provides services to individuals with disabilities to enter or re-enter the workforce. They can assist with determining areas of employment that a person may be able to work in as well as funding to get help in looking for and obtaining employment and then supporting the employment via job coaching, work adjustment and follow up until an individual is stable in a job.
- Assess and determine a documented disability and provide services to assist the client in working with community employers to provide employment for the disabled with duties they can do accomplish successfully.
- DVR helps people with disabilities start a business
- You provide vocational rehabilitation services, training, job placement, public education, and independent living support. State Licensing Agency for Randolph-Sheppard and some other specialized services. Both state and federal funds.
- Well, DVR's goal is to place people with disabilities in jobs that allow them to reach independence and participate in the community. I believe that mostly counselors do case management and referrals to others for services rather than provide them directly. These services include pretty much anything (within reason and budget) that will help the individual go to work-education, equipment, clothing, disability adjustment counseling,

career and aptitude testing as well as provide benefits counseling about going to work and benefits.-The DVR provides a myriad of technical assistance services to a diverse group of people to ensure that they maximize their educational and professional potentials to enable them to contribute to the well being of themselves, their families and the community.

- DVR is there to provide services and training to the DD population interested in obtaining meaningful and competitive employment-Provide services to employers to connect them with work ready persons with disabilities. Provide work ready assistance to individuals, job coaching, ADA consulting, etc.
- They are supposed to be helping people; try and find work. And, get them; placed, with someone, who can (and will); help them, to find work.

What is DVR doing well?:

- The office in Grand Junction is very receptive to working with individuals affiliated with the local community centered board. They are accommodating with scheduling meetings to fit the needs of the individuals requesting services. Communication between counselors and CCB staff is excellent. Good working relationship.
- I think they are trying to get individuals the jobs they want and not set them up for failure. I think they do a great job of helping people get transportation to/from work which I think is the biggest obstacle for a lot of people to overcome.
- Persevering with the clients and providing individualized services, the true heart of DVR.
- They collaborate very well. They seek out ALL available resources to help their customers. They give the customer "homework" and make sure they are involved in the vocational rehabilitation process.
- DVR has worked with some of my clients to obtain greater skills and education which will hopefully help make them more employable.
- If the client has aspirations towards a goal i.e. "This is really what I want to do." DVR will do everything in their power to help the client to be successful.
- Presently not much.
- Perpetuating services that would better provided by local providers.
- This survey
- Maintaining what currently exists, collaborating with community partners/stakeholders, getting consumers employment
- Doing AT needs assessments for people at work.
- There is definitely a need and benefit for services. DVR utilizes situational assessments to determine the best possible job for a client.
- Giving HOPE that there is assistance, even though service rendered was limited
- The work very well with the CCB and ensuring they meet the needs of the individuals.
- From a provider perspective, I believe most DVR counselors strive to do their best to assist consumers to reach their employment goals.

- Randolph Sheppard Communication with consumer groups Good Intentions in a difficult state and federal bureaucracy Better counseling services, for the most part, as compared to years gone by
- Concern for clients, openness to talk about services. In my region the DVR staff at the top have come in with an attitude of "we know more than you do so listen to us." When that was pointed out, they seemed to be more partner like. Good presentation to the deaf folks in our community about how DVR process works, calmed people down considerably

What could DVR do differently?

- Contact with more creative business people for job development.
- They need more DVR counselors in each county to serve applicants and assist in finding adequate jobs.
- Sometimes it would seem that DVR is closely guarded secret. I would have never found out about DVR if a friend at Workforce hadn't told me to get an appointment with DVR
- Faster intake
- Put more effort in helping individuals find jobs quicker if possible.-If resources permit, to ensure caseloads of DVR counselors are reasonable so that they can be responsive to the client as needed.
- Provide a job assessment person who understands more about spatial and sensory issues and gives clear, descriptive and written directions. Also someone who understands how to use current technologies (i.e. I-phone prompt apps to break down a task and to use as reminder during work time when distractions interfere with job execution).
- Hire more creative people to do job development for people with significant disabilities.
- Be more available, more offices and counselors!
- I know finding companies/businesses to meet the need is difficult but I guess to continue trying to find new opportunities with different companies/businesses.
- Get some more counselors. It is very difficult to provide services to so many deserving people due to the lack of people providing those services. The ladies in the office in my building are so overworked; I don't know how they do it, but I am very glad they do.- Communication back within a timely manner, and communication, period.
- Hire more counselors; lessen the work loads so that the participants don't have to be the "squeaky wheel" to receive services from their counselor.
- Timely communication-Develop marketing materials which show the return on investment for putting someone with a disability to work.
- Change it's agency culture by hiring and promoting persons with disabilities within the agency.

- This question is a little redundant. They need to explain what possible services we as the person with a disability could use. I would love for them to advocate for me.
- Think "outside of the box" to creatively help people with more significant disabilities (including developmental or cognitive disabilities) find and keep jobs they like and will stick with and where they are valued for the contribution they make both through their work and through their presence in the workplace. Respect and value people with developmental or cognitive disabilities as equal to other people.

What else should DVR know in setting goals/priorities?

- Keep up the very good work that you do. Wish there were more of you to keep up with the client demands for services.
- I think it's great that you are doing this survey and hope I will be able to see how you are using the results in a positive way to improve your services for ALL people with disabilities. Thanks.
- Thanks for doing what you do! Please keep looking for opportunities to improve. The best solutions will come from your consumers 😊
- I think it would be very beneficial to have a training on how DVR and Independent Living Centers around the State can work together and how the relationships can be improved.
- Have a better assessment in place to match client with job and match clients with job coaches.
- Benefits and AT are the wave of the future. Ever thought about tele-rehabilitation services for rural communities?
- Inter-agency trainings/meetings would be helpful to stay up on changes.
- Preparing people for jobs is only the first step, preparing them for job loss, loss of existing benefits, and the other nuances of remaining employed long-term is even more important. Most of people use DVR to get an education, transportation, computer, or other services and supports, very few are employed long-term after this huge investment.
- Timeliness and shorter process time.
- Collaboration With other agencies, commissions, and organizations that work with disabled communities should be a major priority.
- Provide education regarding DVR mission and goals to nonprofit organizations.
- Need a better understanding of the need to coordinate with long term Medicaid support.

Placement Vendor Survey Comment

What is working well for you in partnering with DVR in providing services for our consumers?

- Good communication with the counselors. Counselor high expectations and enthusiasm for the potential of job seekers.
- My training is in a specific area related to vision disability/blindness and there are specific counselors who work with clients.
- good rapport with DVR re: referring job seeking clients..
- Enjoy the clients and the work and the pay is good
- Consistent communication with the DVR counselor. Meetings with the DVR counselor and consumer to ensure client continuity.
- DVR has been wonderful helping Easter Seals to find suitable clients to work in enclaves. Most recently we have started doing individual placements as well. A DVR counselor from the Northglenn office took time to meet with us to explain the process, expectations and benefits of individual placements. I has been a wonderful partnership.
- I seem to be doing everything myself without any support from DVR
- Most of the counselors we work with are easy to partner with and we have good communication.
- Persistence
- I have a good relationship with my referring DVR counselor
- Overall support and our job satisfaction
- I love working with DVR and what works well for me is that the counselor understand the challenges in working with this population
- We have a very good working relationship with our DVR office. There is one DVR counselor who primarily works with our population. This has helped streamline services.

What suggestions do you have as to how DVR can better partner with vendors?

- Provide a fee schedule for supported employment that comes closer to what vendors must expend to locate job orders. Other states, such as Washington and Oklahoma have been more successful than Colorado in employing people with developmental disabilities. I believe this is a result of fee schedules that provide adequate fees for successful rehabilitation outcomes.
- Meet with specific counselors who work with clients who are Visually Impaired/Blind
- Have contracts with job placement business when the right prospective client can work with.-More job availability-Higher rates.
- Continued improvement with communication regarding the status of clients services.
- The ability to get information of DVR services to vendors.-Provide more information on other ways vendors can participate in helping to find jobs for individuals.
- If a situation arises then discuss it and come to some sort of resolution, answer emails. As a vendor I have always felt that I am a part of helping a counselor close cases but if I am having problems then I want to talk to the counselor to help resolve issues so cases can be closed. Have better communication.
- I don't know how this would be achieved, but the DVR counselors tend to have a more optimistic view of how "employment ready" the individual is than we discover, once we start working with them.
- Going well so far, so none
- Send surveys that don't waste my time. I tried to provide you with accurate info but was not provided with options to answer a question "na". So, somebody who doesn't DO job placement, just provided you with useless info about how to improve job placement. I'd say it was a waste of both of our time.
- Better placement fees as extensive time can result in low pay, more understanding from supervisors and decision makers
- Be patient not give up focus on successes be supportive.
- Make sure everyone knows what kind of and how much support they can get from DVR.

- Sometimes there is a long wait between when services start and things actually happening. This can get frustrating to the individual if they aren't informed of the issue that is causing the delay.

SWAP Survey comments

What might help improve services to DVR participants?

- Transportation
- I am still learning DVR and SWAP process. Having the process from referral to IPE development become shorter somehow. The process is lengthy and does take a while for an individual to get through it. Individuals want a job now and not later? Not sure?
- We have been going through a long process of finding a permanent DVR Counselor. So at times it can be difficult to help schedule appointments when our Counselor is not here locally. At times we may have to wait for a short period to get a response.
- Being able to do some of the status changes
- I feel that our relationship with our DVR counselor is such that whenever one of our clients is in need of support in any area the need is quickly addressed and met.
- More staff
- I think more allotted time for DVR to work with us and our clients
- The biggest barrier is our current job market-which you all can't do anything about. If we could provide a sheltered work experience with the ability to work along side the youth and be able to be active in the area of work ethics.
- Improved systems and coordination between agencies and schools. Work ready participants. Similar language between school and DVR. (Very confusing). Stop using SWAP as a last resort, when no one knows what else to do. This includes schools, DVR and parents.
- smaller case load
- Better participation from employers, more ADA training, more employers interested in incentives and WOTC.
- Having the participants do an internship or un-paid work experience
- Less time spent on office administration (reporting requirements, surveys), etc. and more time to spend in field with marketing activities geared toward community employers, parents and youth.

- Stronger collaboration between DVR and School District. Often DVR see the school assessments and program as non valid information.
- Overall understanding of the intricacies of the DVR process could better prepare SWAP providers to best serve youth
- Better definition of differences between SWAP candidates and DVR direct referral.
- More time? I think that the state SWAP team and DVR provide excellent training opportunities. I feel that I would provide better services with more trainings. I would like to have trainings quarterly with each training highlighting a specific barrier.
- Overall understanding of IEP's and best accommodations to have in place prior to job search
- Better record sharing between DVR and SWAP. Sometimes when a client is transferred from the general case load or if an evaluation takes place, SWAP doesn't always get information regarding the disability.
- Lighten the case load of DVR Counselors that work with SWAP to afford them more time to network with educational partners, such as time to attend IEP Staffings, Back to School Nights, P/T Conference Nights, Job Fairs and meetings with SPED Depts and Special Services Directors. Also, more time to devote to hands on activities with SWAP each month in joint job development visits to local employers and meetings with SWAP Coordinators.
- More consistency among DVR counselors with policies/procedures
- more time 1-1, more frequent informal check-ins
- It could be helpful to have Business Outreach Specialists seek more employers that are looking to hire participants 16-25 years old. Help with finding business's that would work with youth who have mental illness issues.

What else should we know when setting goals?

- Continue trainings offered in the past , network opportunities, counselor training about SWAP, and input on development on a comprehensive transition continuum...when to refer, roles & responsibilities, other support sources when DVR/SWAP service are not enough.
- The only thing I believe would be the process to become somewhat shorter and not as lengthy. I do understand there are steps to follow but sometimes this can unmotivate a youth/individual to want services we may be able to provide.
- We have a huge struggle with clients receiving a interview when there is no phone number to reach them. If we could some how have a couple of pre paid phones that we would check out to our clients. Than they would return once they get enough money to purchase their own. This would help out a lot. Some time clients put the neighbors or a family members number down. Who knows if they receive the messages though. Thank You.
- Alternative transportation methods in mountain areas.
- Increase in work experience, developing relationships with employers in our community.
- The biggest difficulty in the process is, in my opinion the schools. SWAP and DVR relationship is much more polished and functional than school and SWAP. This is largely due to changing school staff and lack of continuity. It seems that every year, there are new school staff that need to be trained, and even some resistance from schools to provide proper documents and/or formats to effectively communicate process and usefulness of SWAP to both students and parents.
- I think in an ideal world, DVR would have a separate "program" just for youth that is more youth friendly.
- I have had a great experience, overall, working with DVR.
- Is there a way we could partner with an agency that would help with emergency or temporary housing when our youth may need to leave an unsafe situation.
- I would like a better understanding of the AWARE system and how I can collect information and documents that would be more efficient.

- Keeping open counselor positions filled to the best of DVR's ability so they can serve our SWAP clients.
- Youth that are not appropriate for swap, but are appropriate for DVR, should be handled differently than the general population. I feel that there should be a counselor that provides services for transition youth.
- I wish we could serve illegal aliens
- In my experience, I've learned that employers want the biggest bang for their buck and they seem to hire on that basis.
- I appreciate this survey. What a great first step in improving services offered to SWAP participants. Thank you!!!
- I feel our young consumers often are a few years behind maturity wise for their age, this needs to be taken into consideration when DVR has discussions of any kind. The youth are drilled that DVR is an adult agency when in fact the youth are in transition with SWAP and are still learning some of the necessary skills. Their self esteem needs to be built up more

GENERAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

What were your expectations when applying?

- My goal is to get assistance from DVR to help, guide, and train me for a suitable, satisfying job that would benefit me and my future so I would not have to rely on Social Security Administration for benefits.
- I thought the counselors would help me make the right decision on changing careers to something that could accommodate my disability or help me find a school to train me in some other field to find suitable employment.
- I had no expectations. Going into it I had no idea what vocational rehabilitation really was and how it could assist me.
- I thought they could help get me a good job that wouldn't make me lose my disability benefits.
- wasn't sure what to expect
- Help me find a part time job that I could physically do without causing myself further injury.
- I was hoping for financial assistance in buying hearing aids
- Help me prolong my working years.
- help with my recovery process
- I really wasn't sure, I heard that they helped with underlining issues that hurt employment.
- Assist me in finding a job and assistance with adaptations. I also need them to speak with employers to help them understand that with adaptations I can do the job.
- I wanted to learn productive ways to deal with my learning disability
- I still wanted to be able to work as much as I could. To help in my income issues, and to have self confidence in myself.
- I thought DVR would help prospective employers understand that I have a hidden-disability (brain injury).

- I was not sure what they could do for me, after going through the process i learned they could help with a lot of struggles/other issues
- Assistance with accepting, coping, and adapting to my oncoming disability in order that I may continue to be a productive member of my community. (B) Guidance to prevent me from losing everything I've worked hard to earn over the past 50 years.
- By learning how to find a job putting together a resume and interviewing.
- I was told that DVR would have a list of know employers that accepted employees with disabilities that were not published on hiring sites.
- I went blind and decided that I needed help to overcome my new disability.
- Find a Job
- to find a job, to become self sufficient to reach my goal of future to build good future

During the referral and eligibility process, what, if any, barriers or challenges did you experience? Please explain

- The packet that applicants need to complete was very lengthy, difficult, and frustrating. There was a lot of information what was requested.
- Feeling as if I should be able to work, but my body/mind tell me otherwise, it is frustrating when I have to explain this, when I barely understand it myself.
- None
- I wanted to work with a mental health clubhouse and the DVR counselor there, but the mental health agency wouldn't let me participate in the program.
- I was helped through out the entire process which made it very easy and stress free for me. I already had enough life altering experiences going on in my life.
- Not having my own automobile limited my options as to how I am able to get to appointments with DVR, doctor visits, etc. that were needed to make this determination.
- I have not experienced any barriers or challenges.
- Just the waiting time.
- No barriers, it was a pleasant experience.

- Long waiting process.
- Getting information on the process and services available.
- Figuring out how I was going to be able to pay for my portion.
- Barrier – difficulty hearing during appointments with DVR staff. General embarrassment over loss of hearing and financial distress.
- It was very professional and the process went very smooth.
- There was a ton of paperwork.
- It was a lot of paper work and tests but the woman was very nice and very kind.
- I have completed 2 assessments. The first did not go well because I did not understand the process.
- Too much paperwork, lots of time preparing
- I was concerned that my anxiety /depression would not be ENOUGH to be considered for assistance. And was thrilled to know that I was accepted.
- Sending out release of medical information and other medical paper work sent to and for DVR and my doctors.
- Try to understand what and why things are happening.
- Proof of disability from DR.
- Two buses is problematic but beyond that none at all. That's not a barrier if you want it bad enough, though it is a challenge.
- Lack of communication between the counselor and the Doctors over my diagnosis.

What could improve the services you were provided?

- They could be better informed on the job market and who would help with intern positions or volunteer positions that could lead to employment.
- More realistic guidance for career paths that coincide with my disabilities.
- Increase communication (updates on status) during application process.
- more job postings, list of employers that hire people with disabilities. When looking for a job, it is not know if the company works with DVR so mostly I have to tell them I am working with DVR.
- help with college books, let me know what they could help with
- There were no transitional employment opportunities that were offered to me. I haven't worked in 12 years and would need to be able to transition back to work so my health wouldn't be adversely effected.
- I think DVR is doing just fine.
- Is there any way to more closely monitor caseworkers and their caseloads. For example I was in the system but still got lost. Is there accountability for the caseworkers? For example is there management that reviews caseloads with the individual caseworkers to MAKE SURE they are doing everything they can to help clients and are not losing people in the system? Possibly a weekly report generated weekly that management sits down with the caseworker to review and ensure the caseworker is doing all they can and doing it correctly. The full responsibility should not be placed on the disabled person. They have been through enough. They are seeking help and no case should get lost in the system.
- more job placement opportunities
- Listen carefully to request for the specific area of help I needed. Make it faster to connect to needed services.
- Listen to me. I know my strengths, weakness AND I have worked in the past.
- Nothing-just continue the great work you all do.
- Pair counselors with clients according to their experience dealing with different types of disabilities.

- Be more timely with information and returning calls.
- They could be better informed on the job market and who would help with intern positions or volunteer position that could lead to employment
- More Timely and return my phone calls. Set me up for additional cane training and adaptive technology/computer help.
- From my experience, I can't think of anything that DVR could have done differently to improve the services I've been provided.
- Housing stipend or assistance.
- Maybe have fewer clients per councilor. Mine was too busy to take care of me and get back when I contacted him.
- It is very possible that those who are seeking assistance have more immediate needs such as food, clothing, shelter, health care, etc. or some less immediate or less drastic needs such as job training, computer training, even how to obtain a computer at low or no cost to them, etc., I think, are needs to be fulfilled sometimes to reach a job goal. And if these services are available in the community and these resources are listed in a booklet or pamphlet it would be very helpful for someone who is early in the process can utilize this and be proactive in helping themselves in reaching their job goal. Having such a list of resources/services of the very area the DVR office serve and make this available to those who have a job goal gives that person something to work with and could make a big difference for them.
- If DVR had some type of internship program with perhaps the counties or city clinics or hospitals, this would be helpful for me in attaining "experience" in my field. For example it would be beneficial for me to do a paid internship at Denver Health to get the "experience" employers are requiring. Presently I'm struggling to get an opportunity to prove myself with an employer in my field because the only experience I have is book "experience". Emily Griffith Technical College did not have an internship position in my field and ultimately I found my own internship with the City and County of Denver in voter registration for my internship credit at Emily Griffith Technical College.
- Perhaps some more communication with my employer concerning my disability would have been helpful to help my employer understand my disability and how it does and

does not affect my work. This would have helped my employer avoid some misunderstandings.

- A suggestion or two are have statewide town meetings in urban and rural areas to meet directly with those in the community who are disabled and give them an opportunity to voice their concerns about setting goals and priorities on where the improvements should be. In a rural area it could simply be a 4 inch ramp built in order to make it easier for a wheelchair can have better access to the DVR office. A more welcoming front door starting with a resource booklet of free services in the community available in the immediate area or county that will help individuals reach their job goals.
- DVR might put the application and other service paper work online to save paper and time for those who can access them.
- More publicity that DVR is an option for people who become disabled would open up the opportunity to people who have been working all their lives and then become disabled over the course of their careers and employment. I went through some difficult years with my employer prior to researching what I could find to help me and "stumbling onto" DVR on the internet. Making the resources more widely known and available would be very helpful to others in situations similar to my own.

Consumers seeking employment survey

What changes could DVR make to improve our ability to assist consumers in finding employment?

- Have not had an effective counselor or job coordinator. Extended periods of time between communications. Need help in advocating for me in a job placement. May require training and coaching and some monitoring. Have started w/DVR several times. High turnover in coordinators have hindered the process. Need someone who is dedicated start to finish on helping me find a job and helping me assimilate.
- I think and feel that I am getting best DVR can provide
- First, your counselors should know which employers in the area are willing to hire people with disabilities. Those relationships should be nurtured by DVR. Second, I was not told until very late in the process about the tax advantages available to employers who chose to hire me. That should have been explained early on, so that I could explain that to the people who did interview me.
- More involved and less overworked
- Be more willing to provide opportunities for training for a career.
- When I first began the process of finding employment I felt that DVR would be more involved in the process of helping me find gainful employment. I did not have a clear understanding that DVR could only set up help with other places such as Careers Inc and Bayaud but would not be part of actually helping me find a job. I know that there is human error involved in every aspect of life but because I have so many people to speak with from different companies linked to DVR I find it difficult sometimes to know who to ask certain questions. I feel that there should be a stronger understanding of what DVR's role is and how they are supposed to help clients. I have felt at times I have to talk to 3 different people to get an answer to 1 question and due to that fact sometimes these different people do not have a clear understanding of the process that DVR has so I feel very unsuccessful in my career goals.
- DVR has been responsive & helpful in placing for training and follow through on assessment. I wish more long term services were available to those who are DD but understand the log jam is with Denver Options not DVR.

- It would be nice if you could find programs to help people with higher education levels. Perhaps you could have a few counselors who specialize in working with people who are higher functioning and/or not in need of extensive services. This might allow more resources to be focused on the clients with the greatest need.
- For clients like myself who have an emotional/mental disability and has decent work experience and education, it would be helpful if DVR could assist these people with finding work with the State of Colorado and the City of Denver. DVR knows the clients limitations, the demands/requirements for the work, and have an understanding of these business cultures. Success in a position with the State or City would be more promising.
- PARTNER w/clients: networking groups, paid training, worthwhile job leads, employer networking opportunities, employer open interview leads.

What other services might help you find a job?

- Networking events with employers.
- On the job training programs.
- Job training opportunities.
- doing more outreach with potential employers would be great letting them know that there are people such as myself that are ready and willing to work if given the opportunity.
- Actually making available to the client, funds for training to update computer software skills that are necessary to find a current job (Ex: recent version of QuickBooks software). -Allowing On-the-job- training funds to gain recent work experience.
- Affiliations with employment agencies who have current clients actively acquiring additional help.
- Need an advocate that seeks out employers. So far I have had very little response in using the internet to seek out jobs.
- none (just need a better economy)
- Information about openings. The outreach coordinator either is not finding leads or sending them out appropriately.
- the job market
- more self employment services
- More knowledge of non-local employers. I seek work as a medical transcriptionist, and there are many groups that hire over the internet on a national level, but they didn't seem to know anything about that at all.
- jobs website specifically for people with disabilities
- ability to take qualifying tests e.g. "work keys" etc. in large print to minimize my visual impairment
- More job sites (such as connecting Colorado) to research job leads that I could physically handle and contact me via email and/or phone message.
- More employers that offer &/or specialize in disability friendly jobs.

- Training.. more of it.. because I have done one job for so long I don't how to do anything else. have classes for us to learn.. and to be good at a job so we feel good about ourselves knowing we can do other things just as good as the next person.
- assistance with filling out paperwork
- Just don't give up!
- due to circumstances of the economy you are doing your best.
- Tax break for employers

What changes could DVR make to improve our ability to assist consumers in finding employment?

- Because of my extensive Business background, everyone thinks I can find a job by myself. In fact, I am experiencing a crisis I have never faced before and need more involvement from those who are involved with the unemployed.
- Need more help in finding employers that are will to start a person that has no experience in the line of work or field of new training there are pursuing.
- I think they did a pretty good job overall.
- pound on networking
- Stick with people and help walk them through the whole process. We hear what is being said, but do not see the whole picture so it is hard to follow something that you don't understand. Resumes are hard to do and even harder to understand how too right them correctly.
- Spending more time with helping finding jobs. Explaining interviews & applications
- It would be nice if you could find programs to help people with higher education levels. Perhaps you could have a few counselors who specialize in working with people who are higher functioning and/or not in need of extensive services. This might allow more resources to be focused on the clients with the greatest need.
- PARTNER w/clients: networking groups, paid training, worthwhile job leads, employer networking opportunities, employer open interview leads.
- Advocate for their clients by speaking directly to companies that are hiring persons with disabilities and following up with them. Seek out companies that hire persons with disabilities for high level jobs, not just entry level positions.

Please tell us anything else you feel we should know when we plan our future goals and priorities for improving how DVR assists people to find employment

- Getting tax paying prospective employers to more fully understand and recognize the value of having DVR candidates and the economic savings available to them.
- The overall result was very well done and very professional. I appreciate DVR's helps greatly.
- Keep hiring people that really care and goes all out of their way too help
- More explanation of the ticket to work program and closer association with the department of social security to be able to fully explain what will happen to benefits would assist people not only in building their goals but determining what hours they should work should they not want to work full time.
- Just keep doing what you are doing in helping people feel empowered and able to work. My counselor had more faith in me than I had in myself. How wonderful is that?
- Just that DVR needs to be more excited when one of us gets a job.

General Vendor

Are there other services (not listed in the above question) that you have provided to DVR consumers that they have needed to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently? (Please describe or list.)

- Intervention with employers prior to termination where the question is can the consumer perform the functions of his/her job with reasonable accommodation.
- Socialization skills
- Translation of applications and communications to and from native language
- I worked for Aspen Diversified Industries from 2005 - 2006 and conducted vocational training, job coaching, job training and job seeking skills, as well as assessment and adjustment training. I found those skills valuable assets not only to the consumer, but to me as well. Witnessing how the consumer conducted tasks in the work environment provided me with valuable insight as to what the consumer's specific challenges are. These observations became part of the treatment plan (role-play, model adaptive behavior, etc.) to help the consumer learn or improve much needed skills (often interpersonal).
- Targeting CBT or Cognitive behavioral Therapy to identify sources of NTP's (Negative Thinking Patterns) to increase self image and positive behaviors necessary in building business confidence.
- Resume services for employment Small business development
- Referrals to other services, Child Care, Readjustment to DOC clients, parenting skills, communications skills (ie assertiveness) and relational skills (ie codependency), social skills (ie building support systems),
- Personal grooming
- Focus improvement; ability to deal with stress of work place and job search
- community resources
- ergonomics
- Creating branding for self-employed individuals. This includes but is not limited to logo, branding, business cards, marketing materials, website creation.

- Life skills
- Social skill/relationship building and healthy lifestyles
- teaching clients how to handle conflict
- I think each person, regardless of their disability, should receive an assessment of their situation that tells them in no uncertain terms what they need to know that will help them understand their disability and what they need to know that they have done in the past to adversely affect their job performance. The report should tell them what they need to do now and how they can improve their on the job difficulties so that their attitude and disability won't or the severity is reduced so that it will not affect their job performance and what they as individuals need to do to improve their chances of long term employment. Right now, it seems to me that the individual comes in to DVR with the idea that DVR will fix or eliminate the problems the disability creates and all the consumer has to do is consume the services. I think, right up front the client should be evaluated and given a report - a written one of what DVR can do and what it can't do and let the consumer only come in for services where he or she agrees to their part of things.
- none that I can think of now.

Are there other services that you feel DVR consumers need to successfully get and keep a job and/or live independently that DVR does not provide at this time? (Please describe.)

- Better accountability so clients receive requested services without waiting very long periods
- As needed the services can be very unique to each individual. I think the services offered are terrific as are the staff that I have met but each need may not be as defined nor even recognized until it is required. Some seat of the pants decision making is always required.
- I believe DVR people or great...the processes they have to work with need streamlining
- Help them learn how to market their companies or themselves for employment most cost effectively
- Drug/alcohol testing for services, I'm not sure what TBI services you have but I see a great need for a group of skill building for better coping.
- I feel DVR is providing the proper services and training. It is the employers that need to be trained in how these people can provide services to them.
- I have worked with DVR for a number of years (out of the Pueblo office). I refer clients to DVR services on a regular basis. Generally, clients tell me that they had no idea the services were available. I wonder about the numbers of people who don't have someone like me to refer them.
- Faster time frame of delivering services
- Development of 'can do' attitudes
- The delivery of additional self employment services for so many individuals who are better candidates for self employment careers and the rewards they offer to individuals who do struggle with traditional employment along with there disabilities
- As needed the services can be very unique to each individual. I think the services offered are terrific as are the staff that I have met but each need may not be as defined nor even recognized until it is required. Some seat of the pants decision making is always required.
- Do not know what DVR provides.
- I think emotional counseling is a key factor in their success.

- communication skills - help with handling conflict
- ASL would be helpful for the profound hearing patients.
- More aware of the job market.
- DVR advocacy: as the job market gets tougher, perhaps more tax incentives need to be legislated.
- No I believe that DVR is covering most services for their clients.
- Psychological support, Cognitive skills training, Financial training
- Long term support

What else could DVR have provided or done as part of an orientation to becoming a DVR vendor to help you feel you had a clear understanding of what the process would be and/or what would be expected of you?

- A little more clarity and consistency as it relates to the fee schedule and DVR language & definitions
- better understanding of vendor selection process and job bidding process. My work is feast or famine and I never know when I might get a call from DVR. Would be nice to be proactive but I have no idea how or if that is an acceptable action for a vendor (to request work).
- Give examples of vendors who have helped consumers achieve their employment goals and how their partnership with DVR made that happen. Maybe a list of 'dos and don'ts for vendors. Info on how and when to communicate with counselors to persuade them to use our services.
- I didn't really "get" what DVR was, what it does for its consumers, and how I fit into the system. In other words, there was no real orientation beyond "You can teach this person something s/he wants to learn t do."
- Direct me to the website from the start. I think there was more information out there that I was not directed to.
- I would be good to have DVR have at least yearly contact to maintain coordinated relationship
- Be directly contacted when I was approved as a vendor. To have information on how exactly I submit payment information and how much my services would be compensated. And to have travel time compensated.
- I would like a clearer picture of what DVR counselors are looking for by completion of therapy
- They did an excellent job of keeping in touch and explanations of what was needed.
- More understanding of the clients that they work with and their limitations
- Explain independent contractor insurance and tax info
- Understanding of the billing process and a little training on how to make this process run as smoothly as possible, both for the vendor and DVR staff

- Offer annual update/orientation to all providers
- DVR does a better job around orientating their providers than most insurance companies. I feel very comfortable working with counselors at DVR.
- Orientation to the other services that were provided to my clients in order to have a sense of a coordinated interdisciplinary team approach
- The training to service providers that were offered last year was a great start, keep it up!
- Everything was presented clearly and I understood the requirements and processes completely.
- A training on dealing with submission of invoices, downloadable, descriptions of programs (marketing materials).
- Each vendor should receive an image they can place on their website indicating their status as a vendor for the DVR.
- There was adequate information provided, along with a contact person to whom questions/clarification could be directed.
- How DVR sets hourly pay for my services.
- More information on the billing system
- I feel a refresher course would be in order. It has been over a year since I've spoken with anybody regarding DVR.

What might help you provide better services to DVR customers?

- More coordination of care
- Having their phone numbers on the authorization forms. Most consumers do not call to make the appt. If we have their phone numbers WE CAN CALL THEM.
- Better DVR reimbursement rates would help us to hire more staff for job placement of DVR clients. This would enable us to place people faster in jobs and place more DVR clients
- I follow concise DVR guidelines and goals for the clients I have worked with, which has created a successful alliance and outcomes with clients and DVR counselors.
- More information that we could hand out to patients
- Timely communication from DVR counselors re: consumer status, authorizations, etc. Referring only consumers who are truly ready to work
- more consistent communication and follow up as to what will best benefit the client
- Much of the time I am not given adequate information about the client being referred. It makes it hard to make a good job match when information is withheld and it comes out later in the process. For example I was working with one client and was not told he uses medical marijuana. Many employers will not hire an individual who uses drugs regardless if it is medically prescribed due to safety issues. In addition the client will be referred but the paperwork takes a long time for us to get. We are not supposed to start working with a client without authorization. This causes the client to become upset because they need to wait for services to start.
- A training session (2-3 hours) that describes and defines how DVR works, what variables are used to determine eligibility for services, constraints related to Counselors and their function, and identifiable problems in the interface between DVR and service providers.
- More coordination with DVR
- DVR counselors have been very supportive
- Guideline on when to refer to DVR
- Regularly scheduled meetings with consumer, DVR counselor and provider to communicate progress (i.e. monthly in the first quarter, then move to 1 x per quarter).

This ensures all parties involved are informed and updated. It also holds the parties accountable.

- Better communications FROM the student/clients with there scheduling.
- Have a better understanding of what services DVR Customers are in need of.
- Better DVR reimbursement rates would help us to hire more staff for job placement of DVR clients. This would enable us to place people faster in jobs and place more DVR clients.
- Knowing well in advance their disabilities to adjust the presentation of classes and/or plan on providing tutoring.
- making use of group training models
- customer commitment to comply with requirements
- More training in working with specific populations
- Additional information sharing with the counselors regarding consumers skills, abilities, challenges, goals, current technologies, equipment, etc.
- Having a background check done. A lot of times we are turned down on job offers because of this information coming out in the end from the employers
- fewer no shows/cancellations/reschedules
- I would like to have a better understanding of the client's needs, history, and disability.

Please tell us how DVR can improve the services we provide to persons with disabilities to help them get or keep a job and/or live independently.

- Use more outside help. The DVR counselors have too large a caseload to be as effective as they'd like to be.
- Reward outstanding counselors and vendors. recognition and additional compensation is a good incentive.
- Work closely with the other systems that the person has accessed so the plan is not overlapping and is efficient use of resources. Let's not make them dependent on us but not cut them off too early and set them up for failure.
- Continue providing the services as you have been. DVR does a good job!
- DVR Counselors have so many clients on their caseloads that they aren't able to manage communications and meetings with their clients well. Clients and staff often complain that the DVR Counselor doesn't get back to them in a timely manner, doesn't provide them with updates on the clients' status and expects vendor staff to follow through on expectations of which they have not been informed. Reducing caseloads for DVR Counselors would allow them to focus on their customers/vendors and increase critical communications.
- Consistency between counselors. Timely communication with families, consumers, vendors. Providing authorizations when needed without vendor having to contact counselor.
- As with all services/supports to individuals with disabilities, there is more demand than resources. Despite this economic reality, I have been impressed with DVR's receptiveness and responsiveness to Client ideas and needs.
- I think having a meeting where issues and concerns can be addressed and also ways to get more DVR referrals would be very helpful. I think more information on what the DVR counselor's want and need and what they are looking for from the vendors would also be very helpful.
- Do more disability awareness training to employers to help create more interest and comfort in hiring and working with people with disabilities
- This is one agency I consistently am impressed with. DVR does a wonderful job that no one else does.

- Give clients incentives to complete their program in steps. Many of the clients I worked with were not able to grasp the long term goal of their plan.
- Some short term group psychotherapy that would use DVR clients as supports to fellow clients.
- Don't take for granted that clients understand how all of that works
- develop motivational skills in clients

Please tell us anything else you think we should know for setting goals and priorities for providing services.

- I would welcome the opportunity to do field work again. I believe observing the consumer in the potential work place provides us with insight and a unique opportunity to target our approach with a higher level of accuracy. While I was employed with ADI, I mentioned the option of video taping the consumer in their work environment and using the recording as immediate feedback for self-correcting actions. A picture often conveys the message more powerful than a written report that is rendered and reviewed days or weeks later. I think it could be a wonderful tool when used appropriately.
- I think DVR is on the right path. Keep going and don't lose heart. Success will come.
- Invite vendors to get to know new counselors from time to time, so that they are familiar with the services that are being offered.
- Continue being a resource for people with all types of disabilities. DVR is doing a great job.
- DVR counselors seem so overworked that they don't have time to coordinate with me.
- Employer education.
- There is presently the dilemma of continuing to pursue gainful employment for individuals with developmental disabilities in the workplace, during an economic time of declining opportunities. In spite of this, DVR is doing a remarkable job of continuing to provide services and support, taking on new clients, rather than putting them on a waiting list. Thank you for being open to increasing self-employment exploration!
- Having a group of employers from the community to help with giving information as to what they are looking for, how to approach them, what vendors/support persons can do to best help the clients...
- Overall, I see that DVR has been effectively able to work with many more client issues than in the past. (example- DVR can now work with clients who have been unsuccessful in finding work though not necessarily identified as a typical DVR client in the past.)
- My patients are hearing impaired by have different degrees of understand on how and what to do. DVR needs to remember that they are hearing impaired and have a difficulty understanding or do a great deal of misunderstanding because of their disability. They

need to be reinforced with instructions with written instructions to understand exactly what they are expected to do.

- As I fill out this questionnaire, I am becoming aware about how much more effective I can be if I know all of the areas in which DVR offers services. I often send my client back to the counselor for help in a vocational area, without really knowing the scope of DVR's services. An orientation in this area would be really helpful. Many of my clients have TBI's and they get easily overwhelmed with asking for what they need. I would like to be clear about the direction I give them, in terms of what DVR can actually do.
- Encourage the consumer to be more active in pursuing employment.
- cultural barriers often include educational deficits, and some of the paperwork required can be overwhelming. It would be helpful to many who would like to enroll, if the process were less lengthy and easier to understand. The law requires a lot of disclosures that are beyond the understanding of many of our clients. Perhaps the wording could be a little more intelligible.
- More follow up on student progress.
- A database to enter the contact information and then submit bills electronically would be a helpful tool. This would result in timely information to counselors from our contacts with clients. The DVR counselors are very busy people and sometimes it takes a few calls to give them the information on clients. I've moved to billing once or twice per month to reduce the amount of paperwork coming across the counselor's desk to help save time. However, this slows the payment cycle on already discounted services I provide. I would like to commend the folks I have worked with at DVR, they are professionals who work very hard to serve a tremendous number of people -- my experience is they go the extra mile!
- Not sure what else would be helpful
- It's a great program because it's very important that people with disabilities live independently and productively. I encourage you to focus on what is working on build on your successes. And use your successes to support your case for getting funding. This is an important program that should continue.
- Adjust your budget so that you can either: 1) buy assistive technology from the school districts that is working well for transition students, or 2) invest in a technology loan bank

and an ATP so that you can successfully assess graduates' need and potential re technology replacing assistance by individuals.

- Better communication systems are needed.
- The better I understand what the DVR counselor needs for me to focus on in my evaluations, the more I can do just that.
- need clearer interpretation of benefits/restrictions when working with DVR and maintaining medicaid benefits.
- Better follow-up
- In Western Colorado our issues are different from the Eastern Slope. We have few services available and fewer job opportunities. Training "from the ground up" is needed for our population - how to apply, how to interview and fill out applications for employment, technical college opportunities, and training is needed.
- More coordination with other agencies
- Employers need dependable workers, and many are unaware that DVR clients may be a pool of qualified workers who come with built in support. Educating the employers via chamber of commerce and job fair presence could help perhaps.
- Help for homeless DVR clients would be great!