

DRAFT

FY 2014 State Plan

State Goals and Priorities

Attachment 4.11(c)(1)

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
 - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
 - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

FY 2014 State's Goals and Priorities

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) employs many goals to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly those individuals with the most significant disabilities. Furthermore, DRS recognizes those services essential to needs identified in the comprehensive assessment, evaluation of the Designated State Unit's performance on Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) standards and indicators, and services vital to the operation and effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program in West Virginia.

For the development of agency goals and priorities, DRS and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) utilized the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA; conducted in FY 2012), agency data, and input from a variety of VR stakeholders.

The SRC maintained involvement throughout the development and assessment of agency goals and priorities in a variety of ways and provided DRS with valued input and recommendations. DRS executive managers, representatives of SRC, the West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) were invited to discuss DRS goals and priorities for carrying out the VR and supported employment programs. The Executive Directors of the SRC and SILC attend monthly DRS Executive Management Group (EMG) meetings to discuss various ongoing issues affecting the agency and is privy to the current goals,

objectives, and strategies pertaining to specific agency issues. Additional involvement occurs through DRS staff members attending SRC and SILC meetings to share information regarding agency performance, needs assessment, and State Plan activities. All SRC members were provided draft copies of the CSNA and the FY 2013 State plan for review. Additionally, the SRC formed a subcommittee on needs assessment and the State Plan. The SRC members discuss DRS activities at regularly scheduled meetings and provide input to DRS.

DRS values a data-driven approach to the development and assessment of agency goals and priorities. Therefore, DRS has adopted benchmarks, where appropriate, to track and measure progress toward achieving its goals and priorities. All goals and priorities are of equal importance to the agency and have no rank order. The goals and priorities appearing below are set for fiscal years (FY) 2014 and 2015.

Goal and Priority 1. Exceed the RSA benchmarks for evaluation standards and performance indicators.

In order to produce quality employment outcomes and maintain an effective VR program, DRS continuously strives to improve its performance on the RSA Standards and Indicators by meeting or exceeding federal benchmarks for employment and equal access indicators. Since the inception of RSA Standards and Indicators, DRS has successfully met the federal requirements in all federal fiscal years. DRS continues to work toward satisfying the RSA requirements for evaluation standards and performance indicators annually.

DRS has set a benchmark for Goal and Priority 1 to exceed the federal benchmarks on all RSA Standards and Indicators.

Goal and Priority 2. Improve and maintain the consistency of policy interpretation, implementation, and casework practices through a comprehensive quality assurance program.

In FY 2012, DRS conducted a quality assurance review (QAR) of closed cases (post-services) to complement the pre-service reviews previously conducted. Results from these reviews will be used as a baseline for future quality assurance reviews to measure any change in uniform policy interpretation and casework practices. Quality Assurance Review Training was conducted at the 2012 WVDRS State Training Conference for all counselors, supervisors, and managers. The training sessions, led by Quality Assurance (QA) Unit staff members, covered all FY 2012 QAR Case Work Domain Areas receiving a positive indicator below the Division goal of 80%. To measure the effect of the QAR Training, DRS will conduct the next QAR when a sufficient number of cases have been initiated and closed since the training occurred (September 2012). DRS expects a sufficient number of cases will become available by October 2013, after which the QA Unit will begin to conduct the QAR.

DRS has established a benchmark for goal and priority 2 at an overall score above 75% on the 2013 quality assurance review.

Goal and Priority 3: Create and maintain collaborative relationships with community providers [including CRPs, Independent Living, and other community providers] to enhance the availability of services to DRS consumers.

In FY 2013, DRS conducted follow-up surveys of DRS counselors and CRP staff members to assess the quality of the working relationship between DRS and CRPs. Preliminary results indicate improved ratings of working relationship quality, with 93.3% of CRP respondents indicating a “Good” or “Excellent” working relationship with DRS. Preliminary results of DRS counselor responses also indicate improved working relationships with CRPs with 82.9% of counselors giving a “Good” or “Excellent” rating. However, when asked about the quality of CRP services, only 72% of counselors provided a “Good” or “Excellent” rating. Therefore, DRS will continue to implement strategies to increase CRP service quality.

DRS has established benchmarks for goal and priority 3. These benchmarks include an overall rating of “Excellent” or “Good” by at least 78% of respondents to the CRP perspective surveys regarding the working relationship with DRS. Additional measurements will be collected through DRS counselor reviews of CRPs. DRS has set benchmark of 80% of responding counselors indicating an “Excellent” or “Good” rating of CRP service quality.

Goal and Priority 4: Increase the availability of job coaching/supportive employment and other validated service gaps within the community.

Preliminary findings from FY 2013 follow-up surveys of DRS counselors indicate reported service gaps for CRP services continue to exist in areas around the state.

Though perceptions of service gaps still exist in several locations around the state, DRS conducted a validation assessment that found CRPs providing these services in several areas of the state, indicating a need for further investigation. A CRP “menu” has been enhanced to keep counselors informed of the DRS-acknowledged vendors and specific CRP services available in their area. In FY 2014, DRS will continue to investigate reports of service gaps and respond accordingly in targeted areas where an identified service gap exists. It is important to note that many field staff have less than two years of experience working with DRS; the need for additional training for these staff members may exist.

DRS maintains its commitment to increasing the availability of these services and has established a benchmark for goal and priority 4 of eliminating validated service gaps, as reported by DRS counselors in needs assessment surveys regarding CRP services.

Goal and Priority 5. Improve access and availability of transportation options at the community level for DRS consumers who need transportation assistance to meet their rehabilitation goals.

FY 2012 CSNA findings indicate a need for continued efforts to increase the availability of transportation throughout the state. Based on responses by DRS field staff, members of the WVSILC and Centers for Independent Living, and Consumer Affairs Conference (CAC) attendees, transportation continues to be an issue and a perceived barrier to employment/training. DRS has implemented several initiatives to help alleviate the need for transportation while taking into account the wide array of circumstances that West Virginians with disabilities experience. DRS has authorized the direct purchasing of cars for consumers as well as the creation of the Vendor Travel Reimbursement for CRPs who provide transportation for consumers; counselors also encourage consumers’ family members to assist with reimbursable transportation. In FY

2014, DRS will continue to make sure that consumers are aware of these options and continue to identify targeted solutions to the varied transportation issues for West Virginians with disabilities, focusing specifically on individualized transportation solutions.

DRS has established a benchmark for goal and priority 5 at providing more consumers with transportation services than the previous FY. In FY 2012, DRS provided 1,968 consumers with transportation services.

Goal and Priority 6. Develop strategies for outreach efforts to minority populations.

This goal and priority is based on results of an analysis of minority populations in the DRS service delivery system. Based on the FY 2012 CSNA, a comparison between the service needs expressed by overall DRS consumers and those from minority backgrounds at application indicates the two groups have similar primary service needs. Weighed against the percentage of minorities in West Virginia, the minority population in the DRS system continues to be well represented. However, a continuing examination of minority populations suggested a few areas where this population may be underserved or unserved.

In FYs 2012 and 2013, informational fliers were mailed to households in areas where people with disabilities from minority backgrounds may have been underserved/unserved. This initiative is still ongoing. The agency will monitor the impacts of these efforts and modify them as needed. The agency will continue to strive to reach out to individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds, especially to the identified minority population in areas where there appears to be proportionately fewer of these individuals in the DRS system.

DRS has established a benchmark for goal and priority 6 at a 0.85 on RSA Performance Indicator 2.1. In FY 2012, DRS had a minority background service rate of 0.817.

Goal and Priority 7. Increase the number of blind/visually impaired (VI) DRS consumers served by 5% per year and expand services to blind/VI DRS consumers statewide.

DRS strives to expand services provided to blind/VI consumers statewide. This goal is based on some comments from the Consumer Affairs Conference survey, such as “Nitro is not accessible to blind individuals, cannot be independent if you have to depend on others to drive you to training”, some comments from the DRS Field Staff survey on service needs and gaps (e.g., “Training for blind locally” and “No local CRP working with the blind in Wheeling”), and the perceptions of service needs and gaps as reported by DRS counselors/supervisors/managers in some DRS offices.

Based on these findings, DRS has established a benchmark for goal and priority 7 at a 5% increase in the number of blind/VI consumers served from the previous FY.

Goal and Priority 8. Improve services to transitioning youth with disabilities (TY).

DRS strives to provide high quality VR services to TY. Beginning the rehabilitation process as early as appropriate leads to a smoother transition from the school to work setting.

DRS has established a benchmark for goal and priority 8 of acquiring a baseline of the percentage of Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) developed before a secondary student (at time of application) exits the school system.