

Agenda

VERMONT STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

Thursday, October 1, 2020

9:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Zoom (contact 802-760-0574 or kate.larose@vermont.gov for link)

GOALS

To plan and focus our work this coming year we will:

- Welcome /build engagement and input from all
- Review current SRC structure and celebrate accomplishments
- Discuss needs assessment and committee reports sent ahead
- Assess other trends that will impact the coming year
- Choose priorities for this coming year
- Enjoy each other

9:30 Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome
- Public comment
- Agenda review and approval
- What draws you to the work of the council?

10:00 Celebrate accomplishments and discuss lessons learned to apply to coming year

- Add to accomplishments sent by committees
- Small Group Discussion:
 - What most excites you from this past year?
 - What are some lessons learned over these past 6 months that can inform our work moving forward?

10:40 Eye Break

10:50 Current State: Needs Assessment Data and Trends

- Data review
- Small group discussions: Use the questions on the sheet sent ahead

11:50 EXTENDED LUNCH BREAK

1:00 Regroup and Reflect

1:10 Priorities

- Given your own perspective and we talked about this morning, what is emerging as most important for the SRC to focus on this coming year?

2:15 Break

2:25 Council Members Interest and Closing Activities

- Where are your interests in your work with the SRC this coming year?
- Something you learned today

3:00 Adjourn

SRC Committee Accomplishments

Advocacy, Outreach, and Education Committee

- Collaborated with Statewide Independent Living Council and Agency of Education on SRC presentations
- Followed relevant federal bills including the ABLE Age Adjustment Act and MFP authorization/extension
- Followed administrative actions including SSA rulings and Civil Rights Commission report
- Followed state legislation including unfreezing of attendant services program, hearing aid insurance mandate, and first responders commission
- Kept abreast of upcoming events including the Governor's Transportation Summit, SRC Annual Card Room Event, VFN Youth Summit, SILC Olmstead webinars and networking breakfast
- Provided information about grant opportunities including Transitioning to Economic Self-Sufficiency (TESS) and precluding SSDI enrollment by providing employment services
- Supported roll-out of "Working with Disability" project with Public Assets Institute and other partner organizations
- Provided advocacy for Vermont VR in filling vacant positions and importance of employment services as the economy opens up
- Provided education on COVID impacts to specific programs, services, and benefits

Performance Review Committee

- Met our statutory obligation to review and provide feedback on VR's goals, priorities, and performance updates with regards to the WIOA Unified and Combined State Plan
- Met our statutory obligation to review and provide feedback on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Reviewed the Rehabilitation Needs of Youth and Students with Disabilities Prevalence and Vocational Rehabilitation Services for Students and Youth Pre-ETS
- Reviewed statewide data on disability and employment in Vermont
- Reviewed state and national data before and after WIOA
- Reviewed data on the need for VR services for students and youth

Policy & Procedures Committee

- Extensive review and revision of Post-Secondary Training and Education policy to bring into compliance with WIOA
- Review and revision of Audiology policy
- Continued work on Self Employment policy
- Initial review of WIOA Requirements Related to SSI/SSDI Beneficiaries and decision to develop separate chapter focused on SSI/SSDI
- Began review of Transportation policy
- Review and revisions to Maintenance policy
- Reviewed and commented on COVID-19 Guidance for VocRehab staff

Steering Committee

- Planned for and held four full SRC meetings and the annual retreat
- Ensured that the SRC met membership requirements through appointments and reappointments
- Transitioned the SRC Coordinator role from contractor to VR staff member and provided feedback on workplan
- Approved member recruitment materials, a membership directory, and a plan for onboarding and training materials
- Transitioned all SRC meetings to virtual meeting platforms to continue our work uninterrupted during COVID

VR Needs Assessment

SRC Feedback on Key Data Findings

Overview

Every three years DVR is required to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment for vocational rehabilitation services. The assessment involves the review of a broad cross range of data from multiple sources including census data, national studies as well as Vermont specific data. The needs assessment is intended to direct our state plan and our goals and priorities.

This year, the SRC Performance Review sub-committee has identified some key data points. We wanted to get more input from the full SRC into the assessment without overwhelming you with data. So instead, we have pulled some key data findings for your feedback. Please provide any observations or thoughts that can go into the final version of the Needs Assessment.

[1] According to American Community Survey data:

24% of Vermonters with disabilities report working full time for the full year

59.7% of Vermonters without disabilities work full time for the full year

Questions: What do think is behind this substantial difference? What could DVR do to close this gap?

[2] According to ACS data, the employment rate for people with disabilities has gradually increased since the end of the 2008 recession. See below data:

- 2013 34.6%
- 2014 36%
- 2015 41%
- 2016 41.4%
- 2017 45.9%

Questions: It is highly likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will greatly impact these numbers? What should we do to mitigate the impact of COVID-19?

[3] The likelihood of a person with a psychiatric disability achieving an employment outcome with DVR is consistently lower than other disability group.

Questions: What do you believe is behind this difference? What could DVR do differently to improve outcomes for individuals with psychiatric disabilities?

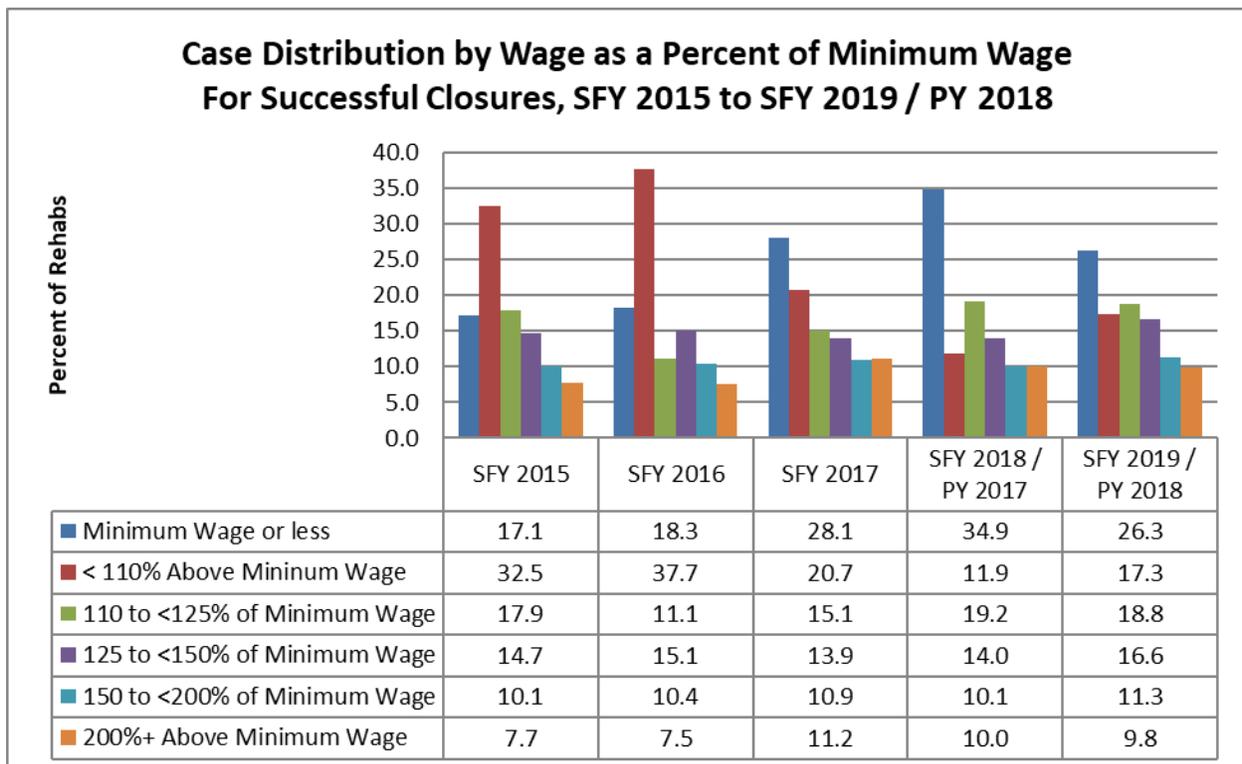
[4] National data indicates that about 20% of offenders have a psychiatric disability. DVR is required to track offender status as a potential barrier. Below are the percentages of consumers with a psychiatric disability who are also offenders:

SFY 18 15.1%

SFY 19 17.1%

Questions: Does this data surprise you? What challenges are there serving this population? Are there things we should be doing differently?

[5] The following chart shows the hourly earnings of DVR consumers and closure over the past five years as measured against minimum wage.



Questions: What is your reaction to the hourly wages data? What do you think VR should do to help more participants earn higher wages?

[6] In the customer satisfaction survey conducted by Market Decisions, VR received a very high satisfaction rating. There were no differences in consumer satisfaction found based on race or ethnicity, except for people who identify as Hispanic or Latino. While Hispanic or Latino consumers make up a small fraction of DVR consumer base (1.4%).

- They are less positive across the entire spectrum of core metrics
- They are more likely to experience problems
- In their feedback, they are more likely to report:
 - They need more information about programs and services
 - They need more support or services, had to fight to obtain services, or need more guidance
 - The VR program is not effective in helping customer or helping customer meet goals
 - They need transportation assistance, did not receive needed transportation assistance
 - There are issues with accessibility and condition of VR facilities
 - They had to wait to receive services, have not received services

Questions: What do you think might be the reasons behind these results? What does DVR need to do as a program to improve services for this population?

[7] DVR Services for youth 16 to 24 who have exited high school.

DVR served 1,385 out of school youth in SFY 19

- About 300 were served through the JOBS supported employment program
- 333 were participating in post-secondary education and training programs
- 199 participated in a work-based learning experience

Questions: Why are there not more youth participating in post-secondary education and training? What should we do to increase youth participation in some of these activities?