

Approved Minutes
Vermont State Rehabilitation Council
POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 4, 2024

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Meeting called by:

Sherrie Brunelle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Members Present:

- Andrea Bacchi
- Sherrie Brunelle
- Cari Kelly
- Jacquie Kelley
- Laura Siegel
- Tara Shatney (non-voting)
- Emily Wagner

Members Absent:

- Amanda Wheeler, excused
- Sarah Sterling

SRC Liaison:

- James Smith

SRC Coordinator:

- Janice Leonard

Speakers or Presenters:

- n/a

Guests:

- n/a

Interpreters:

- Bobbi Gravier
- Mareike Larsen

1) Introductions (Sherrie Brunelle)

Discussion:

Everyone introduced themselves and we welcomed the new member Jacqueline Kelley.

Conclusions:

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

2) Approval of Agenda (Sherrie Brunelle)

Discussion:

Sherrie asked for any proposed additions or changes to the agenda. Cari moved to approve the agenda and it was seconded by Laura. No discussion. Vote was 6-0-1.

Conclusions:

Motion passes: today's agenda accepted.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Finalize agenda and upload to SRC Website, **Janice Leonard, 1/30/24**

3) Open for Public Comment (Sherrie Brunelle)

Discussion:

No one from the public was present.

Conclusions:

n/a

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

None

4) Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (Sherrie Brunelle)

Discussion:

Sherrie asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the Minutes from November 2, 2023. Emily moved to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Cari. No discussion. Vote unanimous 7-0-0.

Conclusions:

November 2, 2023 minutes were approved.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

- Approved minutes uploaded to SRC website and link emailed to members, **Janice Leonard, 1/30/24**

5) Election of P&P Chair (James Smith)

Discussion:

Discussion held for the addition of a future Vice Chair. This would include Attending meetings with James, track policies needing updating, etc. An additional 10 meetings per year. Laura said that she would be interested. We decided to accept nominations for this position today as well.

Request for nominations for Chair was given. After three requests, the nominations were:

- Sherrie Brunelle. Cari nominated Sherrie and it was seconded by Andrea. It was approved with a vote of 7-0-0.

Request for nominations for Vice Chair was also given. After three requests, the nominations were:

- Laura Siegel. Laura self-nominated for position of Vice Chair and it was seconded by Cari. It was approved with a vote of 7-0-0.

Conclusions:

- Sherrie Brunelle will continue as the chair of the P&P Committee
- Laura Siegel will now hold the position of Vice Chair for the P&P Committee.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

6) Vote: Chapter 308, Self-Employment

Discussion:

There is a group working on this with feedback from the consultants Griffin & Hammis. Intention was to make this more concise.

Feedback from group:

- The Business Plan. Andrea shared that with an MBA and background in business, she worked with BROCC (Brattleboro, Rutland Community Action) and found the 80-page Business Plan that she created was overwhelming, unnecessary, and delayed the plan? HA appreciated the point and explained that the policy does not require working with a Micro Business Development professional. The Guidance section would be a key to making this process applicable to the individual and not just the person with no experience.
- Competitive Integrative Employment term was used consistent with regulations and explained.

- It was suggested to add the word "Microsoft" in front of SharePoint. SharePoint is one word. If an average person read the document they wouldn't know what SharePoint is. HA will go back and revise use of this term.
- The word "system" is inconsistently used throughout the document.
- Dollars – is there a clear reasoning for cost. HA explained that we Required to have a Rate Setting Policy which is in the works. There are always exceptions allowed.
- Section 1 c "start up costs", how is the criteria set. This was kept for historical reasons. HA will remove.
- Was there anything in policy about collaborating with Community Partners? HA explained that it didn't want to put specific names of organizations due to inconsistent quality and reliability. The goal is provide much more guidance to all staff. Use Griffin & Hammond tools and resources. Include the role of HA – part of a team.

Move to approve Chapter 308, Self-Employment policy with the suggested amendments. Cari moved and it was seconded by Emily. 6-0-0. Self-Employment Chapter 308 is approved with suggested amendments. This draft is currently being reviewed by RSA.

Conclusions:

Chapter 308, Self-employment policy is approved with the recommended changes.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

7) Vote: Chapter 315, Home Modifications

Discussion:

Highlight disabilities to include above the neck. Chapter 315.

Feedback:

- Do not need full text in section Paragraph C line 5 starting, "Although the persons Master Plan...", can simply say "Only the Home Modifications necessary to meet the Vocational goal will be provided". Larger purchases will be reviewed with the supervisor. HA will change.
- Section 2 procedures: Paragraph B, why do we ask supervisors to maintain building codes, etc. we don't have the specialties. Expectation of Counselor to approve the work should also be removed. HA explained Counselor needs to verify the work is complete, but the other will take out.

- Spending Guidelines paragraph A, add the RSA language, cannot set limits but can provide guidelines. HA agrees.
- Participant will use other available funding sources before HA contribution. HA agreed, Counselor will assist participant identify other resources that may support modification.
- Home modifications like a flashing doorbell, fire safety program, etc. Can wording be added to ensure that this is understood in this policy? HA this would be a resource list. Is there a resource list so that when working with participants the counselor will know. This would be a training issue and included there.

The motion to approve Chapter 315, Home Modifications with the changes discussed. Laura moved to approve, and Emily seconded. 6-0-0 vote, approved

Conclusions:

Chapter 315, Home Modifications is approved with the noted changes.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

8) 2nd Review: Chapter 101, Confidentiality

Discussion:

Feedback:

- Section 6, access to records, 3,4, 5 needs guidance around potential harm. "If there should be an expectation that a supervisor will review all". HA explained that it is the policy to review all of them,
- Section 4a, consent. When counselor and staff must release information, is the counselor required to let the participant know. Family Services would find this problematic – if the participant found out about data collection prior to investigation this could affect results. Would background checks have the same effect, etc. because we cannot discuss criminal history without the participants' consent. HA agrees – will need to clarify with lawyers.
- Consistent wordage – person vs participant. HA agrees and will make the changes.
- Complaint process is needed in the policy, a mechanism for problems. HA is under AHS and must comply with HIPPA, but wording in policy is not clear.
- Need a section on what Informed Consent is. Informed Choice is different. Also, the definition of complaint process can be found in 34 cfr 361.38 c4.

- There was an instance when a participant previously approved the information sharing of a provider a year ago, but the release was outdated. When does the participant need to be contacted if a contact is made. HA explained that this may be a practice issue as opposed to a policy issue.
- A statement on how information is shared – in encrypted form, “Encryption of information when sharing information” statement is not in this policy. Statement saying if received in error.... May need to be included. HA this is included in the IT department. This will change frequently, and we wouldn’t want it to get outdated right away. HA Statement about sharing consistent with AHS policy at least.
- Section 3 doing a referral with consent, we can only share information we generated, not information we’ve received from other sources.
- Section 7, subpoena piece. When HA Counselors testify in administrative hearing when approved by supervisor if in best interest in participant. When making official testimony staff need guidance from attorneys is important because can be used for Disability Benefits, etc. and counselors don’t know the law. Clarify no testifying without referral to lawyer, even administrative?

James will provide a revised version for review at the next committee meeting.

Conclusions:

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

9) Rate Setting – Hold off until reviewed by RSA

Discussion:

Been sent to RSA, we’ve received feedback and are responding. Then James will create a new appendix section with guidelines and rates. This will be a guideline and not a policy.

Conclusions:

Will be in future.

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

10) Other Business & Agenda Setting (Group)

a. Other Business

Discussion:

None

Conclusions:

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

b. Agenda Setting: March 9, 2024

Discussion:

Confidentiality

Old policies

Conclusions:

Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:

11) Adjournment (Sherrie Brunelle)

Cari moved that the meeting adjourn, it was seconded by Emily. Sherrie called the meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m. Anonymously approved.

Meeting Action Items, Person Responsible and Deadlines:

- Finalize agenda and upload to SRC Website, **Janice Leonard, 1/30/24.**
- Draft minutes for this meeting, send to Committee Chair for comment then upload to SRC website, **Janice Leonard, 1/30/24.**
- Finalize approved minutes for last meeting and upload to SRC website **Janice Leonard, 1/30/24.**