

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (COMBINED OR GENERAL)

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS;

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Program-Specific Requirements for State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA.

(a) State Rehabilitation Council. All VR agencies, except for those that have an independent consumer-controlled commission, must have a State Rehabilitation Council (Council or SRC) that meets the criteria in section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable, has (select A or B):

(A) is an independent State commission.

[X] (B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council.

In accordance with Assurance 3(b), please provide information on the current composition of the Council by representative type, including the term number of the representative, as applicable, and any vacancies, as well as the beginning dates of each representative's term.

	Current Term Number/	Beginning Date of Term Mo./Yr.
Council Representative	Vacant	
Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)	2	4/23
Parent Training and Information Center	1	12/22
Client Assistance Program	1	3/22
Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor (Ex Officio if Employed by the VR Agency)	2	9/23
Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider	2	11/22
Business, Industry, and Labor	1	4/22
Business, Industry, and Labor	Vacant	

Business, Industry, and Labor	Vacant	
Business, Industry, and Labor	Vacant	
Disability Advocacy Groups	2	12/21
Current or Former Applicants for, or Recipients of, VR services	Vacant	
Section 121 Project Directors in the State (as applicable)	Vacant	
State Educational Agency Responsible for Students with Disabilities Eligible to Receive Services under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	1	6/22
State Workforce Development Board	Vacant	
VR Agency Director (Ex Officio)	Ongoing	Ongoing

If the SRC is not meeting the composition requirements in section 105(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and/or is not meeting quarterly as required in section 105(f) of the Rehabilitation Act, provide the steps that the VR agency is taking to ensure it meets those requirements.

[The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) conducts quarterly public meetings and is working diligently with DSA leadership to fill all vacant seats.]

In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(21)(A)(ii)(III) of the Rehabilitation Act, include a summary of the Council’s input (including how it was obtained) into the State Plan and any State Plan revisions, including recommendations from the Council’s annual reports, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction and other Council reports.

[The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council held an open meeting on September 12, 2023 and reviewed the new goals, strategies and priorities developed by the State Plan Subcommittee.]

Provide the VR agency’s response to the Council’s input and recommendations, including an explanation for the rejection of any input and recommendations.

[The NSRC and DSU continually work together in strategic planning and program evaluation for the VR program. The NSRC input is reflected in the annual report and state plan; however, there were no formal recommendations proposed to the DSU.]

(b) Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). Section 101(a)(15), (17), and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to provide an assessment of:

(1) The VR services needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, including:

(A) Individuals with the most significant disabilities and their need for Supported Employment; [The triennial CSNA was completed on July 31, 2022. It was conducted by the San Diego State University, Interwork Institute. Findings for individuals with the most significant disabilities and their need for Supported Employment include delays caused by wait lists for extended services provided by the Regional Centers. The CSNA also identified the need for parents, school staff, providers and DSU staff to convey and set high expectations for consumers and help individuals with the most significant disabilities strive for their highest potential. Lastly, the CSNA also identified the need to reinvigorate training in SE and Customized Employment (CE) for DSU staff and service providers.]

(B) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program; [The recent CSNA identified Hispanic and

Asian individuals with disabilities as potentially underserved populations by the DSU. At the time of the report in 2022, it was noted that the blind were potentially underserved due to high vacancy rates in the Bureau of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) program, but now the agency is back at normal staffing levels and that is no longer a concern. Additionally, the www.vrnevada.org website and documents are available in the 5 main languages spoken in Nevada: English, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog and Korean.]

- (C) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce development system; and [The CSNA reported the core partners needing regular training on how to effectively work with individuals with disabilities so that they can move beyond a referral relationship and DSU consumers can access partner services. In addition, the relationship between the DSU and the JobConnect (WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser Program) offices needs to move beyond referral to increased co-enrollment and braided funding throughout the State. Lastly, there are still JobConnect offices that need to increase programmatic and physical space accessibility.]
- (D) Youth with disabilities, including students with disabilities and their need for pre-employment transition services. Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under IDEA. [Transportation, lack of job skills, soft skills, lack of work experience and lack of training were common needs or barriers to employment for youth and students with disabilities as indicated in the CSNA. Of the five required pre-employment transition services, work-based learning experiences were consistently noted as the most important pre-employment transition service. Moreover transition from secondary school to college remains a challenge for youth with disabilities in Nevada as they are not aware of the support or accommodations available them and do not initiate contact with disability resource centers at college.]

- (2) Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State.

[The CSNA identified job development and placement, Supported Employment and psychological services as needing to be developed throughout the State. It also noted that the States contracting and insurance requirements are a disincentive for providers and limit the number of individuals that will work with the DSU to become service providers. The CSNA also noted that the DSU needs to develop more assistive technology services and the capacity of providers to work with individuals who have blindness or who are deaf and need sign language interpreters.]

(c) Goals, Priorities, and Strategies. Section 101(a)(15) and (23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. The goals and priorities are based on (1) the most recent CSNA, including any updates; (2) the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and (3) other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the SRC and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act. VR agencies must—

- (1) Describe how the SRC and the VR agency jointly developed and agreed to the goals and priorities and any revisions; and
[Consistent with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, on an annual basis, the DSU and the NSRC, through its state plan subcommittee, jointly develop in public meetings the upcoming year's goals, strategies and priorities. The subcommittee considers recommendations and information revealed through the CSNA, the Annual Client Satisfaction Surveys, the WIOA performance

measures and mandates, and sentiments expressed in the NSRC meetings. The state plan subcommittee meeting was held on July 11, 2023 for FFY 2024 and FFY 2025. The new state plan goals, strategies and indicators were brought before the full NSRC and approved by majority vote in public meeting on August 12, 2023 for FFY 2024 and FFY 2025.]

- (2) Identify measurable goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs and the basis for selecting the goals and priorities (e.g., CSNA, performance accountability measures, SRC recommendations, monitoring, other information). As required in section 101(a)(15)(D), (18), and (23), describe under each goal or priority, the strategies or methods used to achieve the goal or priority, including as applicable, description of strategies or methods that—
- (A) Support innovation and expansion activities;
 - (B) Overcome barriers to accessing VR and supported employment services;
 - (C) Improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, post secondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services); and
 - (D) Improve the performance of the VR and Supported Employment programs in assisting individuals with disabilities to achieve quality employment outcomes.

[Goal 1: Increase the number of competitive integrated employment outcomes.

Strategies:

- Work to ensure all vacancies are filled as quickly as possible, with the understanding that existing counselors in place are the only way VR will achieve this goal.
- Identify key employers and increase partnerships with them to develop work readiness training programs.
- Increase access to quality job development services including utilizing Vocational Rehabilitation’s internal job development team.
- Increase the utilization and promotion of the State of Nevada 700-hour program and federal Schedule A hiring authority.
- Educate and train employers about disability related topics and the opportunities and benefits of hiring persons with disabilities.
- Employ the use of technology and training earlier in plan development.
- Support counselor continuing education training, to include greater emphasis on assistive technology.
- Utilize internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities leading to quality employment.
- Develop a recognition program for businesses who are model employers of people with disabilities, promote a culture of disability inclusion in the workplace.
- Utilize person-centered career planning activities.
- Encourage self-employment and remote/virtual employment options for participants needing those opportunities.
- Utilize the VR Employer Engagement Team as a statewide workgroup to collectivize best practices and identify emerging practices; and to communicate and collaborate for increased cross utilization of resources.
- Leverage resources from the Governor’s Workforce Development Board, Local Workforce Development Boards and America’s Job Center network.

Measures:

- Clients that closed successfully (90 days of employment) in the report timeframe.

Goal 2: Increase participation of Students with a Disability in Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).

Strategies:

- Increase collaboration between Nevada Department of Education/Office of Inclusive Education (NDE/OIE), school districts and VR to assess, plan and deliver pre-employment transition services for eligible student/clients with disabilities, as required by the WIOA and their Statewide and Local education Agreement.
- Continue the utilization of social and web-based media as a communication and marketing tool for clients and their families, caregivers and advocates.
- Improve outreach efforts to Transition Students, i.e. camps, Nevada Student Leadership Transition Summit, internships, incarcerated, hospitalized youth and trainings.
- Assign VR Transition Coordinators to specific schools within school districts to build, maintain and manage pre-vocational programs, provide guidance and monitoring of students with disabilities during service provision and perform outreach to businesses, families, caregivers, and advocates.
- Continue expanding job shadowing and mentorship programs.
- Expand Work Based Learning opportunities for students to explore employment options.
- Expand summer camp offerings and the Summer Youth Internship Program (SYIP) to include alternative break times during the academic year.
- Identify new educational programs and emerging technological solutions for delivery of Pre-ETS in schools and other adequate partner locations.
- Continue the pilot program with the Certified Transition Program (CTP) at the University of Nevada Reno called the Path 2 Independence, which provides a 2-year employment focused certificate of completion for students with intellectual disabilities.

Measures:

- *Student with a Disability*, age 14 – 21 (or 22 per NRS 388.5223), with an actual service and/or authorization in any of the five Pre-ETS categories: Counseling on Post-Secondary Education; Instruction in Self-Advocacy; Job Exploration Counseling; Work Based Learning Experiences; and Workplace Readiness Training with a service begin date in the report timeframe.

Goal 3: Increase participation of Potentially eligible Students with a Disability in VR services.

Strategies:

- Increase collaboration between NDE/OIE, school districts and VR to assess, plan and deliver Pre-ETS for eligible student-clients with disabilities, as required by WIOA and their Statewide or Local Education Agreement.
- Continue the utilization of social and web-based media as a communication and marketing tool for clients and their families, caregivers and advocates.
- Improve outreach efforts to transition students, i.e. camps, Nevada Student Leadership Transition Summit, internships, incarcerated, hospitalized youth and trainings.

- Increase outreach to and increase new partnerships with charter and private schools.
- Assign VR Transition Coordinators to specific schools within school districts to build, maintain and manage pre-vocational programs, provide guidance and monitoring of students with disabilities during service provision and perform outreach to businesses, families, caregivers and advocates.
- Increase communication through educating teachers, 504 Coordinators, parents, caregivers, advocates, and youth with disabilities regarding the vocational Rehabilitation process, programs, and referral services per the applicable Statewide Education Agency (SEA)/Local Education Agency (LEA) agreements.
- Vocational Rehabilitation staff to participate in more Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, when invited. VR staff to attend more career fairs, open houses and special events at schools to discuss the benefits of VR services.
- Work with NDE/OIE, NV PEP and schools to encourage and support family participation.
- Routinely work with school personnel to understand the referral process for transition students. Coordinate with Nevada Centers for Independent Living and NV PEP to promote students and family's participation in transition services including participation in VR.

Measures:

- *Potentially Eligible* Student with a Disability is an individual aged 14-21 (or 22, per NRS 388.5223), enrolled in an educational program, and has a 504 accommodation plan or is receiving transition services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP). A potentially eligible student with a disability has not yet applied for Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- PE Students with a Disability, aged 14 – 21 (or 22 per NRS 388.5223), with an Application Date in the report timeframe.

Goal 4: Increase participation and competitive integrated employment outcomes of Supported Employment (SE) consumers in VR.

Strategies:

- Expand partnerships with Regional Centers which provide supports for Supported Employment consumers.
- Provide appropriate, quality training to staff and State rehabilitation Council members on Supported Employment.
- Identify and support evidence-based practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.
- Continue participation on the Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Committee and the State Employment Leadership Network.
- Utilize data collected in the Consumer Satisfaction Survey regarding the needs of individuals for Supported employment to help drive future goals.
- Determine the historical/education setting use of rehabilitation technology (assistive technology) and ensure continuity and access to similar equipment and services.
- Expand job shadowing and mentorship programs.
- Increase access to quality job development services provided by external job developers with ACRE certification. Work with the VR Employer Engagement

Team to encourage businesses to understand and utilize job carving, job sharing, and part-time/non-traditional shift offerings.

- Create customized employment options.
- Develop a pathway for long-term supports and services, as needed.
- Develop alternative options for extended service providers.
- Encourage active use of established VR programs (i.e., SYIP, Pathway to Work, Project FOCUS, Path 2 Independence, etc.) for SE consumers.

Measures:

- *Supported Employment* is competitive integrated employment (including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working in a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment) that is individualized and customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- SE consumers with an Application, Eligibility, Service and/or Employment Date in the report timeframe and Closure Date is NULL.

Goal 5: Increase participation of targeted disability groups in VR.

Strategies:

- Increase collaboration with Southern Nevada adult Mental Health Services (SNAMHS), Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (NNAMHS) and State Rural Mental Health Clinics including virtual service delivery.
- Collaborate with private mental health/substance abuse treatment facilities, behavioral health hospitals, local providers of vision and audiology services.
- Increase vendor base with private mental health, visual impairment and audiological practitioners for service/referrals.
- Collaborate quarterly with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and local IL centers.
- Collaborate with criminal justice organizations including juvenile justice, parole and probation.
- Provide trainings, resources and tools for staff on:
 - Mental Health
 - Blindness and Low Vision
 - Deafness and Hard of Hearing
- Increase usage of tele-health for VR clients.
- Increase VR's social media postings on mental/behavioral, sensory related health issues and associated Vocational Rehabilitation services.
- Develop a pathway for long-term mental health support and services, as needed.
- Explore further collaboration with the Deaf Commission, National Federation for the Blind and other local and National associations and providers of advocacy and services for sensory disabilities to attend monthly speakers' presentations and annual conference, when able.
- Participate in available mental health, deaf/hard of hearing (D/HH) and blind and visually impaired (BVI) consortiums and related organizations.
- Collaborate with foster youth centers.
- Collaborate with disability resource centers on higher education campuses for these targeted groups.

- Train and educate employers' human resource departments on targeted disability groups.
- Continue to provide a variety of communication and meeting options to all stakeholders.
- Outreach for collaboration for tribal partners and reservations.
- Continue growing participation in and quality of services of the only in-state residential blind skills training program.

Measures:

- Clients that closed successfully (90 days of employment) in the report timeframe.
- Mental health disabilities include depression and other mood disorders, alcohol abuse or dependence, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, drug abuse or dependence, mental illness not listed elsewhere, personality disorder, schizophrenia, and other psychotic disorders.
- Blind or visually impaired disabilities include blindness, deaf/blindness, other visual impairment.
- Deaf or hard of hearing disabilities include deafness primary communication auditory, deafness primary communication visual, hearing loss primary communication auditory, hearing loss primary communication visual, other hearing impairment.]

(d) Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals. For the most recently completed program year, provide an evaluation and report of progress for the goals or priorities, including progress on the strategies under each goal or priority, applicable to that program year. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require VR agencies to describe—

(1) Progress in achieving the goals and priorities identified for the VR and Supported Employment Programs;

Goal #1: Increase number of successful employment outcomes. - GOAL MET

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Clients Closed After Service With No Employment	(B) Clients Closed With An Employment Outcome	(C) (A+B) Total	B + C = %	Goal relates to column (B)
2018	1,048	765	1,813	42%	
2019	1,062	681	1,743	39%	
2020	981	453	1,434	32%	822
2021	1,148	453	1,601	28%	822
2022	989	552	1,541	36%	550
2023	450	263	713	37%	550

Goal #2a: Increase participation for students with a disability in VR Transition services. - GOAL MET

Federal Fiscal Year	Total Transition Student Applications	Goal
2018	772	
2019	495	
2020	506	1,014
2021	147	1,014
2022	772	200
2023	366	250

Goal #2b: Increase participation and increase successful outcomes of students with a disability in VR

Transition services and post-secondary education. - GOALS MET

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Transition Students Closed With an Employment Outcome	(B) Transition Students With Postsecondary Education	(C) Total Number of Measurable Skill Gains for OPEN cases	(D) Total Number of Measurable Skill Gains for CLOSED cases	(E) Total A + B + C + D	Goal relates to column (E)
2018	175	136			136	
2019	87	157			157	
2020	100	194			194	400
2021	117	118			235	400
2022	148	83	356	255	842	300
2023	79	48	300	56	483	300

Goal #2c: Increase participation and ensure students with a disability receive appropriate Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) - GOAL MET

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Potentially Eligible Transition Students That Received Pre-ETS Service	(B) Transition Students With A VR Case That Received Pre-ETS Service	(C) Total	Goal
2018	1,173	330	1,503	
2019	576	328	904	
2020	825	331	1,156	1,898
2021	122	271	393	1,898
2022	355	262	617	500
2023	330	231	561	750

Goal #3a: Increase participation of supported employment consumers in VR. - GOAL NOT MET.

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Total Open Supported Employment Consumers	(B) Total Open Non Supported Employment Consumers	(C) A ÷ B = %	Goal relates to column (C)
2019	511			
2020	529			786
2021	812			786
2022	448	1768	25%	35%
2023	466	2337	20%	35%

Goal #3b: Increase successful outcomes of supported employment consumers in a competitive, integrated setting. - GOAL MET.

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Supported Employment Consumers Closed With an Employment Outcome	(B) Non Supported Employment Consumers Closed With an Employment Outcome	B ÷ A = %	Goal
2018	132			
2019	111			
2020	83			166
2021	97			166
2022	117	435	27%	100
2023	59	204	29%	100

Goal #3c: Increase successful outcomes for students with a disability who are also supported employment consumers in competitive, integrated setting – outcomes. - GOAL MET.

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Students With a Disability and Who Are Also Supported Employment Consumers Closed after Service No Employment Outcome	(B) Students With a Disability (NOT Supported Employment Consumers) Closed after Service No Employment Outcome	(C) A ÷ B = %	(D) Students With a Disability and Who Are Also Supported Employment Consumers Closed With an Employment Outcome	(E) Students With a Disability (NOT Supported Employment Consumers) Closed With an Employment Outcome	(F) D ÷ E = %	Goal relates to column (F)
2020	70			29			
2021	49			25			
2022	106	240	44%	50	98	51%	40%
2023	48	95	51%	30	49	61%	40%

Goal #4: Collaborate with other resources to support participants with mental health disabilities to obtain and maintain successful employment. - GOAL NOT MET.

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) Clients Closed After Service With No Employment and a Mental Health Disability *	(B) Clients Closed With An Employment Outcome and a Mental Health Disability *	(C) A + B = C	(D) B ÷ C = %	Goal relates to column (D)
2018	416	307	723	42%	
2019	439	307	746	41%	
2020	460	162	622	26%	330
2021	437	184	621	30%	330
2022	388	173	561	31%	40%
2023	173	93	266	35%	45%

Goal #5: VR staff retention efforts as a reflection of employee satisfaction and positive work culture. Decreased negative turnover indicates increased employee satisfaction.

Federal Fiscal Year	(A) VR Counselors	(B) Rehabilitation Technicians	(C) Total	(D) Retired	(E) Transferred to Another Agency / Resigned	(F) Avg Tenure of Separated Staff (Years)	(G) C ÷ E = % Negative Turnover	Goal
2022	37	31	68	2	20	3	29%	
2023	45	33	78	0	10	1	13%	

(2) Performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA for the most recently completed program year, reflecting actual and negotiated levels of performance. Explain any discrepancies in the actual and negotiated levels; and

[PY2022, Negotiated MSG Rate: 30%

PY2022, Negotiated Credential Rate: 20%

PY2022, Actual (unconfirmed) MSG Rate: 42.2%

PY2022, Actual (unconfirmed) Credential Attainment Rate: 38.1%

The DSU exceeded the negotiated levels of performance in Program Year 2022. The DSU's performance in MSG and credential attainment rates is due largely in part to three strategies implemented:

1. The institution of monthly data cleansing days targeting the obtainment of supporting documentation and data entry of MSG and credentials into the case management system. The addition to this targeted effort by the counseling staff, the DSU hired a contractor to assist with the data entry of MSG and credentials into the case management system.
2. The inclusion of MSG and credential attainment rates in counselor work performance standards.
3. Routine review and monitoring of open and closed educational goals in the case management system to ensure accurate capturing of MSGs and credentials.]

- (3) The use of funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities (sections 101(a)(18) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act) (e.g., SRC, SILC).
[The DSU did not receive any Federal section 110 funds earmarked for innovation and expansion activities. Although the DSU did offer to fund I&E for the SILC, they did not produce a plan for appropriate expenditure of those funds, and consequently, the DSU did not fund any external innovation and expansion activities. It is noted the SILC in Nevada is not under the DSU, it is under the State's Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services Division.]

(e) Supported Employment Services, Distribution of Title VI Funds, and Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services.

- (1) Acceptance of title VI funds:
- (A) VR agency requests to receive title VI funds.
 - (B) VR agency does NOT elect to receive title VI funds and understands that supported employment services must still be provided under title I.
- (2) If the VR agency has elected to receive title VI funds, Section 606(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act requires VR agencies to include specific goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of title VI funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services. Describe the use of title VI funds and how they will be used in meeting the goals and priorities of the Supported Employment program.

The NSRC has established a state goal concerning supported employment services. For FFY24 and FFY25 the DSU will increase participation and successful employment outcomes of Supported Employment consumers in VR. For the participation aspect of the goal, the DSU will strive to increase the number of new supported employment applicants during the federal fiscal year. For the successful employment outcome aspect of the goal, the DSU will increase rehabilitated outcomes to 115 in FFY24 and 125 in FFY25 respectively.

Strategies:

- Expand partnerships with regional centers which provide supports for Supported Employment consumers.
- Provide appropriate, quality training to staff and State Rehabilitation Council Members on Supported Employment.
- Identify and support evidence-based practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment.
- Continue participation on the Behavioral Health Planning and advisory Committee and the State Employment Leadership Network.
- Utilize data collected in the Consumer Satisfaction Survey regarding the needs of individuals for Supported Employment to help drive future goals.
- Determine the historical/education setting use of rehabilitation technology (assistive technology) and ensure continuity and access to similar equipment and services.
- Expand job shadowing and mentorship programs.
- Increase access to quality job development services provided by external job developers with ACRE certification. Work with the VR Employer Engagement Team to encourage business to understand and utilize job carving, job sharing, and part-time/non0traditional sift offerings.
- Create customized employment options.
- Develop a pathway for long-term supports and services as needed.
- Develop alternative options for extended service providers.

- Encourage active use of established VR programs (i.e., SYIP, Pathway to Work, Project FOCUS, Path 2 Independence, etc.) for SE consumers.

Currently, there are several agencies within the community that provide the needed long-term supports to VR participants that have been identified and meet the criteria for supported employment. Depending on a participant's severity of intellectual and developmental disability, participants are referred to one of three community agencies for services:

- Desert Regional Center (Las Vegas)
- Sierra Regional Center (Reno)
- Rural Regional Centers (Carson City, Gardnerville, Fallon, Winnemucca, Elko)

If a participant has a diagnosis of a developmental disability, the agencies listed above would provide long-term, follow-along services for eligible DSU participants. The regional center receives community training funds, which allow them to open cases and provide long-term, follow-along services for the duration of the participant's employment needs. Rehabilitation counselors coordinate services with regional center case managers to ensure that this connection is made before VR closes a participant's case as successfully employed.

The DSU has long-standing relationships with many workforce development partners, both internal and external, that are designed to effectively identify eligible individuals, including youth, with the most significant disabilities. Extended services funded by VR are only available to youth with most significant disabilities and any other extended services that are provided to individuals with most significant disabilities are funded by adult services providers/long-term funding. Under WIOA, there are challenges and opportunities presented to expand the services of supported employment (SE) and customized employment (CE). The collective goal remains to achieve maximum success in assisting individuals with the most significant disabilities into successful competitive, integrated employment outcomes, although transition services and pre-employment transition services are not supported employment services. Supported employment services do not begin until after job placement. Job placement services and any services prior to placement are VR services and may only be charged to Title I funds. Current efforts are focused on building more effective partnerships and relationships with similar entities throughout the state that support these efforts that expand integrated employment opportunities.

Sources for supported employment services and supports include:

- Increased supports as defined in WIOA, e.g., VR's ability to provide long term supports for youth;
- Social Security Administration work incentives, e.g., Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) and Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE);
- The benefits of Aging and Disability Services Division, diverting jobs and day training/waiver funding to instead provide pre-vocational training, and eventual referral of better prepared candidates to Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Natural supports; and
- Expansion of statewide transition services through partnerships with school districts and the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE).

We also have providers through our Employment Network (EN) that provide extended services for individuals who may not have DRC/SRC/RRC services, but have Social Security benefits.

In southern Nevada, the DSU collaborates with the Desert Regional Center, Opportunity Village, a local CRP, and our community business partners to provide The Pathway to Work Program. This program is designed to help individuals with disabilities move from center-based employment services to full-time or part-time community-based jobs at or above minimum wage. It is a community integrated “on-the-job” training program that is conducted at a business partner’s job site. Each Pathway to Work participant is provided with four hours of individualized instruction, job coaching, and work experience involving three to five different job tasks. In-depth instruction includes, but is not limited to: viewing training videos, participation in employer workplace expectations and task performance discussions, and the practice of specific individual skills/techniques used on the job. In addition, participants have access to Opportunity Village job developers funded by the DSU who assist with developing a resume, applying for jobs, preparing for interviews, and job placement and support during the new hire process and beyond. The Regional Center provides ongoing (i.e., post-90 days) supports through the use of jobs and day training (JDT) Medicaid waiver funds.

When mental illness has been identified as a disability, and it is determined that the rehabilitation participant meets the criteria for supported employment, the rehabilitation counselor works with public and private mental health service providers to assist in obtaining long-term supported services:

- Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Mental Health (Reno, Nevada)
- Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Rural Clinics Community Mental Health Centers (Carson City, Gardnerville, Silver Springs, Fallon, Elko, Ely, Battle Mountain, Lovelock, Caliente, Mesquite and Winnemucca, Nevada)

When supported employment participants do not meet the eligibility requirements for one of the above-referenced community resources for long-term support, rehabilitation counselors identify other natural supports that can be utilized. Often family members, (i.e., parents, siblings or spouses) assist. Furthermore, members of various advocacy groups may also serve as natural supports. Counselors also work closely with employers to identify coworkers who can provide the long-term follow-along and supportive services that an individual may require to retain successful employment.

Through collaboration with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center on Quality Employment (VRTAC-QE), VR will receive intensive technical assistance in the area of Customized Employment. The DSU’s ITA plan includes staff and CRP training on customized employment and through this effort will make available practical experience for rehabilitation counselors and community partners in the practice of Customized Employment.]

- (3) Supported employment services may be provided with title 1 or title VI funds following placement of individuals with the most significant disabilities in employment. In accordance with section 101(a)(22) and section 606(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act, describe the quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities; and the timing of transition to extended services.

[VR Transition Teams statewide are working strategically to develop expanded supported employment services to include customized employment. In this endeavor, VR is working with Opportunity Village, Centers for Independent Living and individual, qualified job development providers to serve this unique and expanding population. Extended services funded by VR are only available to youth with most significant disabilities and any other extended services that are provided to individuals with most significant disabilities are funded by adult services providers/long-term funding. Supported employment services do not begin until after job placement. Job placement services and any services prior to placement are VR services and may only be charged to Title I funds]

(4) Sections 101(a)(22) and 606(b)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act require the VR agency to describe efforts to identify and arrange, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services. The description must include extended services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including the provision of extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities in accordance with 34 CFR 363.4(a) and 34 CFR 361.5(c)(19)(v).

[In the transition from supported employment to extended services, upon achievement of employment, the VR counselor will notify the Regional Center Case Manager. During the 90-day period of employment when the SE consumer’s case is still open at VR, the VR Counselor will monitor the employment, speaking with the employer and consumer on a regular basis and assessing services and supports needed to successfully maintain that employment. VR agency may fund extended services for youth with most significant disabilities for up to four years, or until the individual turns 25 and no longer meets the definition of a youth with a disability. A consumer’s VR case is closed, and/or a warm transfer to Regional Center extended services occurs only when the consumer is considered by VR to be “stable” in his/her employment, which is at a minimum of 90 days or maximum of 24 months. “Stable” employment is defined as the consumer performing at a satisfactory level with the current supports that are replicable after VR case closure, either through natural supports or Regional Center extended services.

As the consumer approaches 90 days of “stable” employment, the VR Counselor will again reach out to the Regional Center Case Manager to inform of upcoming VR case closure. If the Regional Center Case Manager, VR Counselor and the consumer (or his/her representative) agree that existing natural supports are sufficient to meet the consumer’s needs, then Regional Center extended services may not be provided. If all parties agree that extended services are in fact needed, depending upon Regional Center funding, the consumer will either be provided those extended services via a warm transfer upon VR case closure or placed on a waiting list. If placed on a waiting list, VR will keep the consumer’s case open so as to continue providing supportive services until such time as the Regional Center can provide those services. In this scenario, the VR case may remain open after the achievement of “employed” status up to a maximum of 24 months.]

(f) Annual Estimates. Sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(23) of the Rehabilitation Act require all VR agencies to annually conduct a full assessment of their resources and ability to serve all eligible individuals before the start of the Federal fiscal year. In accordance with 34 CFR § 361.29(b), annual estimates must include the following projections:

(1) Estimates for next Federal fiscal year—

(A) VR Program; and

Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under VR Program	Costs of Services using Title I Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
N/A	3,196	2,772	\$7,122,350	N/A

(B) Supported Employment Program.

Priority Category (if applicable)	No. of Individuals Eligible for Services	No. of Eligible Individuals Expected to Receive Services under Supported Employment Program	Costs of Services using Title I and Title VI Funds	No. of Eligible Individuals Not Receiving Services (if applicable)
N/A	350	263	\$139,201	N/A

(g) Order of Selection.

The VR agency is not implementing an order of selection and all eligible individuals will be served.

The VR agency is implementing an order of selection with one or more categories closed.

* VR agencies may maintain an order of selection policy and priority of eligible individuals without implementing or continuing to implement an order of selection.

Pursuant to section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act, this description must be amended when the VR agency determines, based on the annual estimates described in description (f), that VR services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for and are determined eligible for services.

(1) For VR agencies that have defined priority categories describe—

- (A) The justification for the order;
- (B) The order (priority categories) to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services ensuring that individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and
- (C) The VR agency's goals for serving individuals in each priority category, including how the agency will assist eligible individuals assigned to closed priority categories with information and referral, the method in which the VR agency will manage waiting lists, and the projected timelines for opening priority categories. NOTE: Priority categories are considered open when all individuals in the priority category may be served.

(2) Has the VR agency elected to serve eligible individuals outside of the order of selection who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment?

Yes

No

(h) Waiver of Statewideness. The State plan shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, however, the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) may waive compliance with this requirement in accordance with section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and the implementing regulations in 34 CFR 361.26. If the VR agency is requesting a waiver of statewideness or has a previously approved waiver of statewideness, describe the types of services and the local entities providing such services under the waiver of statewideness and how the agency has complied with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.26. If the VR agency is not requesting or does not have an approved waiver of statewideness, please indicate "not applicable."

[not applicable]

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. In accordance with the requirements in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act, the VR agency must develop and maintain annually a description (consistent with the purposes of the Rehabilitation Act) of the VR agency's comprehensive system of personnel development, which shall include a description of the procedures and activities the VR agency will undertake to ensure it has an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals that provides the following:

(1) Analysis of current personnel and projected personnel needs including—

- (A) The number and type of personnel that are employed by the VR agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, including ratios of qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors to clients;
- (B) The number of personnel currently needed by the VR agency to provide VR 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 VR agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Personnel Category	No. of Personnel Employed	No. of Personnel Currently Needed	Projected No. of Personnel Needed in 5 Years
Administrator and Deputy Administrator	3	0	1
Rehabilitation Chief	1	0	1
Disability Employment Policy Chief	1	0	1
Rehabilitation Manager	3	0	1
Rehabilitation Supervisor	8	0	3
Rehabilitation Counselor	51	4	10
Counselor Intern	0	2	2
Rehabilitation Instructor	5	1	2
Program Officer	7	3	4
Management Analyst	3	1	1
Rehabilitation Technician	34	4	3
Business Process Analyst	2	0	1
Quality Control	3	0	1
Workforce Services Representatives	8	2	2
Accounting Assistants	7	0	2
Administrative Assistants	15	1	2
Training Officer	1	0	1

(D) Ratio of qualified VR counselors to clients: [1:79]

(E) Projected number of individuals to be served in 5 years: [

Program Year	Number of Clients Served
2022 Actual	3910
2023 Projected	4027
2024 Projected	4188
2025 Projected	4314
2026 Projected	4487
2027 Projected	4666
2028 Projected	4763

- (2) Data and information on personnel preparation and development, recruitment and retention, and staff development, including the following:

- (A) A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program; the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and 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.

Historically, none of Nevada’s postsecondary institutions have offered accredited Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) programs for VR professionals. Consequently, when Nevada needs to hire, it recruits nationally for qualified staff who have graduated from other CORE–accredited programs.

Institute of Higher Education	Type of Program	No. of Students Enrolled	No. of Prior Year Graduates
None			

- (B) The VR agency’s plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel, which addresses the current and projected needs for qualified personnel; and the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the VR agency and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

[With the implementation of the WIOA, and the previous changes to our class specifications, recruiting has been less of a challenge. The DSU typically hires at the RCII, Bachelor’s Degree level, both from in and outside of the state. In addition, the class specifications allow for the hiring of seasoned rehabilitation technicians as counselor I’s. Thereby, creating a career ladder for rehabilitation staff and ensuring consistent staffing levels for the program. Currently, the DSU employs rehabilitation counselors at the I, II and III level. All DSU rehabilitation counselor III’s have certified rehabilitation counselor (CRC) credentials or are eligible to sit for the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) national examination. The DSU works with Nevada State Human Resources to advertise our vacancies on high traffic websites such as Indeed.com and Monster.com. The DSU also posts our vacancies with urban universities that have Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor master's degree programs. The DSU has also added a link to current agency vacancies on our new www.vrnevada.org website, in hopes of attracting people who are already interested in VR to apply. The DSU is also focused on ensuring that our advertising/promotional and social media materials reflects the diversity of our state including persons from minority backgrounds as well as visible disabilities. The DSU’s hiring panels are frequently comprised of individuals of varying ethnicities and backgrounds.]

- (C) Description of staff development policies, procedures, and activities that ensure all personnel employed by the VR agency receive appropriate and adequate training and continuing education for professionals and paraprofessionals:
- i. Particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and
 - ii. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to VR agency professionals and paraprofessionals and for