

**DRAFT ADVANCE E-MAIL TO VR AGENCY DIRECTORS
FROM RSA**

Advance e-mail to VR Agency Directors FROM RSA

Dear _____ [insert name of VR Agency Director]:

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) in the U.S. Department of Education invites your Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency to be part of a study about Supported Employment (SE) programs administered by your agency. RSA grants funding to VR agencies to provide SE services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. These services are critical for individuals with most significant disabilities to maintain supported employment. Hence it is important for RSA to be knowledgeable of the policies and practices in the field and to evaluate supported employment service delivery for improvement and effectiveness. RSA is working with an independent contractor, Westat, to conduct the survey of all 80 VR agencies. The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) has been informed about this survey and has endorsed it.

All VR agencies are being asked to complete a web survey related to the administration of the SE program and services provided. The opinions of VR agencies are valued and are important to RSA. Your responses are critical to provide a complete picture of the SE program and its impact nationwide. The survey information will be used to report on SE services, what services are provided, how the services are financed, and how services can be improved. Once the surveys have been completed and analyzed, three agencies will be selected to participate in an in-depth interview. The selection will be based on responses provided in the web survey and other criteria intended to ensure diversity of agency sizes, perspectives, and services. The interview will focus on examples, clarifications, qualitative assessments, contextual information, and insight to VR agency staff responses on the web survey. Other questions will focus more in-depth on how individuals who receive SE are served by your agency.

We are asking that you identify a staff member or several staff members within your agency who have knowledge of VR and SE to complete the survey. The ideal respondent will have extensive experience and knowledge of your agency's policies and practices in providing SE and VR services to individuals with disabilities. It is critical that the staff member or members who complete the survey be able to respond on behalf of your agency, not just based on his or her personal experience.

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Westat will be contacting you to find out the name, title, address, phone number and e-mail address for the staff nominated to complete the web survey and possibly participate in the in-depth interview. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact Robert Harmon by e-mail at RobertHarmon@westat.com or by telephone at 1-240-314-2348. You may also contact Larry Vrooman, RSA, by telephone at 1-202-245-6523, or by e-mail at Lawrence.Vrooman@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

Lynnae M. Ruttledge
Commissioner,

APPENDIX C

DRAFT ADVANCE E-MAIL FROM THE CONTRACTOR

Westat Letterhead

<State VR Agency Director>

On behalf of the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Westat and InfoUse are conducting an evaluation of services provided by Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies to individuals seeking and/or receiving supported employment services. RSA seeks to understand how each agency serves individuals with a goal of supported employment, and how the delivery of these services varies across agencies and states.

To this end, we are examining existing data, including the RSA 911 and RSA 2; State plans; and monitoring reports. However, to expand our knowledge beyond what existing data can tell us about supported employment, RSA is requesting we hope to gather information from VR agencies directly.

RSA with the assistance of Westat has developed a web-based survey to help answer questions that available data cannot answer. The survey should help us understand, among other things:

- Agency delivery of SE services
- How SE Title VI funds are used
- How extended services are provided

We will aggregate the results of the survey for a report that will provide RSA with a better understanding of how SE services are provided.

Following OMB approval, the web-based survey will begin around March 2012. We are asking you at this time to identify someone from your agency to serve as the main point of contact for us regarding the survey. This person might be the respondent or coordinate with other staff to respond to the survey. Please provide the name and e-mail address of the point of contact so that we can provide him/her with information in advance of the survey about what data to assemble and how to access the survey website. We expect the survey to take approximately 60 minutes to complete (inclusive of time to gather information). Westat will be available to help with any questions you have regarding the content or completion of the survey.

Thank you for your time and your prompt attention to this request. Please send the point of contact information to me at the e-mail address given below.

Robert Harmon

Senior Research Associate

Room RW 2573

1650 Research Blvd.

Rockville, MD 20850

RobertHarmon@westat.com

APPENDIX D

DRAFT USERNAME E-MAIL TO THE VR AGENCY CONTACTS

Dear:

Thank you again for agreeing to help us with this task.

Below is the user name to allow you to accessing the RSA secured website for completing the survey of supported employment programs. Everything should be self-explanatory, but if you do have questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at (240) 314-2348.

Your user name to access the site is: **XXX###**

Your password will follow shortly under a separate e-mail.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Robert Harmon

Senior Research Associate

Westat

1600 Research Blvd.

Suite RW 2573

Rockville, MD 20850

(240) 314-2348

RobertHarmon@westat.com

APPENDIX E

DRAFT PASSWORD E-MAIL TO THE VR AGENCY CONTACTS

Dear

Here is your unique password to access the RSA survey: XXX##X@

You will need to change your password the first time you logon in order to keep it secure. The password is case sensitive and must be eight characters long and include at least one lowercase letter, uppercase letter, a number, and a symbol.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at (240) 314-2348 if you have any questions.

Robert Harmon

Senior Research Associate

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RobertHarmon@westat.com