

Program Improvement Plan for for 2013

Initial PIP - current status: Approved

Introduction

Federal vocational rehabilitation (VR) program regulations (34 CFR 361.82 thru 34 CFR 361.86) establish performance standards and indicators by which the U.S. Rehabilitation Services Administration (U.S. Department of Education) measures the performance of the state VR agencies.

Evaluation Standard 1 measures employment outcomes using six indicators. To achieve successful performance on Standard 1, a VR agency must meet or exceed the performance levels for at least four of the six indicators. In addition, the agency must meet or exceed the performance level for two of the three primary indicators.

Agency FY 2013 Performance

Because the _____, did not achieve the required minimum performance levels for Standard 1 for fiscal year (FY) 2013, it is required to submit this Program Improvement Plan (Plan) pursuant to 34 CFR 361.89 (a). Specifically, _____ did not meet the required minimum performance levels for Indicators 1.1, 1.2, and 1.5, as shown below.

Indicator 1.1

Number with employment outcomes	2,649
Number with employment outcomes (Prior two years*)	2,826
Change in employment outcomes: Indicator 1.1	-177

Indicator 1.2

Number with employment outcomes	2,649
Number who received services	3,857
Percent with employment outcomes after services: Indicator 1.2	68.7

Indicator 1.5

Average hourly wage for individuals with competitive employment outcomes	13.79
Average annual state wage (Fiscal year wage) (weighted average)	50,501
Average hourly state wage (Fiscal year wage) (weighted average)	24.28
Ratio of average hourly VR wage to average state wage: Indicator 1.5	0.568

- Current year data as of March 31, 2014.
- Blind agency prior year data as of April 16, 2013 and April 24, 2012. Note that for Blind agencies prior year data averages data from two prior years.

Agency Goals and Strategies for Indicator 1.1

has established the following goals, including performance targets, and strategies that will enable it to meet or exceed the required minimum performance levels for Indicator 1.1.

Performance Indicator 1.1 – Change in Employment Outcomes

Indicator 1.1 is the difference between the number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period and the number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

The performance level for indicator 1.1 is:

- General and Combined Agencies: Equal or Exceed Previous Performance
- Agencies for the Blind: Equal or Exceed Previous Performance

Factors affecting performance of this indicator might be the State economy, an increase or decrease in the number of applicants, a change in the make up of the agency's caseload, e.g. the significance of disability of individuals served, a change in the number of counselors, and others discussed in indicator 1.2.

Performance Targets

Fiscal Year	Goal to pass indicator	Performance target	Actual performance
2013	0	—	-177
2014	0	2,582	
2015	0	2,700	

Strategies

To enable to achieve the established performance targets for Indicator 1.1 during FYs 2014 and 2015, it will engage in the following strategies.

Standard 1.1, which measures the number of successful closures achieved compared to the prior year's successful closures, was not met in FY 2013. was at 93% of this goal by the end of FY 2013, achieving 1,232 successful closures. To meet this target and the targets for indicators 1.2 and 1.5, DBS analysis shows a need for heightened focus on expanding consumer employment opportunities through strengthened partnerships with businesses, maximizing consumer potential and capabilities based on their job readiness, and increasing the effectiveness of job placement vendors' effectiveness in matching consumers' abilities with employment opportunities.

- Work Matters -- began a new employment initiative in 2013 called Work Matters. A key goal of the Work Matters project is to impact consumer salaries by increasing weekly wages. A program specialist is assigned to focus on leading Work Matters. This initiative assists staff in preparing consumers to compete and obtain higher wage jobs by focusing business development on areas of the labor market with higher wage jobs, primarily technology and skilled trades. In addition, DBS will more closely collaborate with community colleges and trade schools to develop additional

training opportunities for consumers. The Work Matters initiative is designed to:

- expand consumer employment opportunities by building and strengthening strategic business and partner relationships;
- align the counseling critical thinking process around employment opportunities and data to engage consumers in defining their optimal vocational opportunities;
- maximize consumer potential and capabilities based on their job readiness;
- increase job placement vendors' effectiveness in matching consumers' abilities with employment opportunities and;
- align internal metrics and performance indicators.
- Continued outreach to veterans and other underserved populations - DBS will increase staff knowledge and skills with effective rehabilitation strategies for serving veterans and other underserved populations (for example individuals with mental health issues, development disabilities, autism and deafblindness). This will ensure that appropriate services from other entities are used when available.
- Continuous Quality Improvement - will review and if necessary update training for existing and new VR counselors and VR support staff. The review will ensure courses focus on training new counselors and support staff in the core knowledge and skills necessary for all consumers to perform jobs successfully, including those consumers with multiple disabilities.

Modification and Approval

Modification of Plan

Pursuant to regulations at 34 CFR 361.89(c), RSA will review the progress of § toward meeting the goals established in this Plan. Should § fail to sustain a satisfactory level of performance on Standard 1 over the next two consecutive fiscal years (FYs 2014 and 2015), it will request that § modify this Plan to achieve the required level of performance.

Approval of Plan

Approved on 09/10/2014
Approved by Edward West