

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Information Collection for Case Service Report (RSA-911)**

### **Summary of Public Comments and Responses**

U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services  
Rehabilitation Services Administration

## **I. Introduction**

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) appreciates each stakeholder's suggestions and comments on this Information Collection Request (ICR) for the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Case Service Report (RSA-911), published in the *Federal Register* on December 10, 2020 (85 FR 79482). RSA received nine distinct comments from six individuals and organizations, including five State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies, related to its proposal to extend this ICR without revisions. In response, you will find comments categorized into three topics: Support for Extension without Revision; RSA-911 Data Elements; and Post-Exit Data Matching. Similar comments are summarized together, followed by the Department's "response" to each summary of comments.

## **II. Comments and Responses**

### **A. Support for Extension without Revision**

Comments: We received three comments from State VR agencies that indicated support for RSA's proposal to extend the currently approved version of the RSA-911 without revisions for an additional three years. These commenters stated that continuing to collect the same information will provide opportunities to benchmark their data and ensure that accurate and high-quality data is reported.

Department Response: We appreciate these State VR agencies' support for the proposed extension without revisions. No change to the RSA-911 is required based upon these comments.

### **B. RSA-911 Data Elements**

Comment: We received two comments suggesting that RSA revise the language from present tense to past tense in the code value options for Data Element 84: Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Career or Technical Training to reflect that a participant was enrolled at any point regardless of whether the participant continued in the program uninterrupted, disenrolled from the program and returned to the program, or disenrolled without returning to the program.

Department Response: We will not change the code values for Data Element 84 from present tense to past tense because we disagree with the commenters. The code values reflect the enrollment status of participants during a particular quarter. As such, the enrollment in that quarter is reflected in the present tense regardless of the enrollment status in a subsequent reporting quarter. Enrollment status, as applicable, must be reported quarterly on the RSA-911. Data Element 84 is updateable after initial reporting to permit State VR agencies to correct an error with past reporting or reflect changes in enrollment status in subsequent reporting periods. However, the present tense of these Data Elements is still accurate because, for the time period reported, the participant is enrolled. We will continue to provide technical assistance to State VR agencies related to

Data Element 84 and similar ones (e.g., Data Elements 78 and 400) to ensure accurate quarterly reporting of enrollment statuses.

Comment: We received one comment requesting that RSA clarify that Data Elements 78, 84, and 400 should only permit updates from “enrolled” to “not enrolled” if the original reporting was done in error.

Department Response: RSA will not make this change in the RSA-911 because we disagree with the commenter. Specifically, a participant could be enrolled in one quarter of the Program Year but not be enrolled in a subsequent quarter for a variety of reasons. Therefore, it may be necessary for State VR agencies to update these Data Elements for reasons other than data input error. We will continue to provide technical assistance to State VR agencies related to these Data Elements to ensure accurate reporting. However, no changes to the RSA-911 are required at this time based upon this comment.

Comment: We received one comment requesting that RSA evaluate whether State VR agencies should report information using Data Elements 78, 84, and 400 at the time of the VR program participant’s “IPE development” or “Exit” from the VR program.

Department Response: State VR agencies must use Data Elements 78, 84, and 400 to report information related to a participant’s enrollment at the time of “IPE development” because earning a recognized credential (secondary or postsecondary) must be reflected as a goal in the individual’s IPE, thus educational enrollment status must be known and reported when developing the IPE. RSA will not make changes to the RSA-911 based upon this comment. However, RSA will continue to provide technical assistance related to Data Elements 78, 84, and 400, particularly regarding how they are used to calculate the Credential Attainment Rate common performance measure at section 116(b)(2)(A)(i) (IV) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and remind State VR agencies that these Data Elements are updateable should enrollment status change after the IPE is developed. In so doing, State VR agencies will be able to report accurately the enrollment status of VR program participants each quarter until they exit the program. As a result, this will help to ensure the Credential Attainment Rate denominator is accurate.

Comment: We received one comment requesting that RSA align code value 9 (Individual has exited but employment information is not yet available) with “not employed,” as reflected in code value 0 after the fourth quarter of reporting post-exit for Data Elements 379, 383, 386, and 389.

Department Response: RSA will not make changes to the RSA-911 based upon this comment because using code value 9 allows State VR agencies the time necessary to gather information related to the employment status of participants post-exit. This information often lags, and State VR agencies may not always know, by the time of fourth quarter post-exit reporting, if a participant was or was not employed in the first, second, third, or fourth quarters after exit. The RSA-911 Edit Checks permit State VR agencies to report code value 9 in Data Elements 379 and 386, which are only required for students who attained a secondary credential, for all six quarters following exit. For

Data Element 383, the RSA-911 Edit Checks permit the reporting of code value 9 in the first, second, and third quarters after exit; however, by the fourth quarter after exit, code value 9 is not accepted and State VR agencies must report code values 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 in the fourth, fifth, and six quarters after exit. For Data Element 389, the RSA-911 Edit Checks permit the reporting of code value 9 in the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth quarters after exit; however, code value 9 is not accepted in the sixth and final quarter of reporting because the data is available by this point. As a result, by the sixth quarter after exit, only code values 0, 1, 2, 3, or 4 may be reported in Data Element 389. Knowing an individual is employed, but not having the specific information is very different from knowing that an individual is unemployed; therefore, it is not appropriate to align codes 0 and 9.

### **C. Post-Exit Data Matching**

Comment: We received one comment from a State VR agency requesting that RSA collect information related to participants' employment status and earnings, following their exit from the VR program, from an entity such as the Office of Child Support and Enforcement or the Internal Revenue Service to reduce the burden State VR agencies incur by collecting this information and reporting it on the RSA-911.

Department Response: We acknowledge the burden associated with collecting and reporting employment status and earnings of VR program participants following their exit from the program; however, this information is required to be reported by State VR agencies pursuant to section 116(d)(2)(A) of WIOA and sections 101(a)(1) and 106 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act). There is no authority under WIOA or the Rehabilitation Act for RSA to collect the employment data on behalf of the State VR agencies since the statutes are clear the responsibility for reporting this data belongs to the States. Further, section 116(i)(2) of WIOA requires that States use quarterly wage records, consistent with State law, to measure progress on the common performance measures. To facilitate the data gathering process, particularly that related to interstate exchange of quarterly wage records, the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor (the Departments) developed the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) Agreement, which all States signed. One of the purposes of the SWIS Agreement is to make it easier for States to obtain wage data when program participants accept employment in another State. In addition, the Departments issued joint policy guidance (RSA-TAC-17-04) related to the use of supplemental wage information when quarterly wage records may not be available for certain participants. Specifically, the Departments made clear that States could rely on certain supplemental wage information for purposes of the performance indicators at section 116(b)(2)(i)(I) through (III) of WIOA under certain circumstances. For these reasons, RSA determined it is not necessary to revise the RSA-911 based upon this comment.