

Cooperative Agreement

I. Introduction

A. Parties Involved

The Department of Workforce Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, through the College of the Menominee Nation.

B. Purpose

This Agreement is established between Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (hereinafter referred to as WDVR) and the Menominee Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program administered through the College of Menominee Nation (hereinafter known as CMN VR) to enhance, to the greatest extent possible, the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to eligible American Indians with disabilities who live on or near the Menominee Tribal Reservation. Per the regulations of Section 121, the phrase "on or near" shall be more specifically defined by the CMN VR and shall hereinafter be referred to as the CMN VR Services Area.

WDVR has the responsibility to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all qualified residents in the State of Wisconsin. However, CMN VR is the recipient of a "Section 121" grant with the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, which enables them to provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indian individuals with disabilities residing within the CMN VR Service Area. These shared responsibilities create the potential for duplication of services and efforts. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended requires that the State shall enter into a Cooperative Agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians to clarify issues and areas of potential conflict or duplication. Because of the long and historical relationship that exists between the WDVR and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, this is seen as a renewal of the Agreement for collaboration, cooperation and coordination in the provision of services to disabled American Indian consumers, who reside within the tribally-defined Menominee VR Services Area. This agreement will be renewed annually by July 1st of each year.

II. Joint Agreement

The Parties Mutually Agree

- A. To have regular meetings between the staff of WDVR and CMN VR for the purpose of collaborating in delivering services to qualified applicants and consumers.
- B. To cooperate in the operation of a system of service provision which ensures a smooth interface and sharing of cases and information between WDVR and CMN VR.

- C.** The primary responsibility for a given American Indian consumer living within the CMN VR Service Area will be the CMN VR. The CMN VR may transfer eligible American Indian consumers to WDVR if such transfers are mutually agreeable and will allow the consumer to access resources that are not available through CMN VR so the consumer may use those resources for a successful employment outcome. WDVR may also transfer eligible American Indian consumers to CMN VR if such transfer will enhance the opportunities for an employment outcome for the consumer.
- D.** That in situations identified in C above, each agency will maintain separate case files on mutual or joint consumers during the course of service delivery. All appropriate and necessary documentation and information will be maintained and shared by each agency.
- E.** That CMN VR will have primary responsibility for funding of all eligible American Indian consumers living within the designated CMN VR Service Area and the WDVR will have responsibility for funding eligible American Indian consumers living outside of the designated CMN VR Service Area. CMN VR and WDVR will work jointly and collaboratively to ensure that no obstacles interfere with the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.
- F.** That the determination of eligibility, IPE development and Plan implementation is the sole responsibility of CMN VR for individuals residing within the CMN VR Service Area. American Indians with disabilities living outside of the designated CMN VR Service Area will have their eligibility, IPE and Plan implementation completed by WDVR.
- G.** That WDVR and CMN VR may take credit for action on a case and each may close the case successfully if each has provided significant services leading to an appropriate employment outcome.
- H.** That resources of both agencies are available to ensure that the case is properly managed. See E above.
- I.** That individuals served by CMN VR and WDVR shall be informed about their right to make informed choices. Individuals who require or request assistance in exercising informed choice shall be offered support services to assist them in this process.
- J.** To develop and participate in joint training, to participate in cooperative statewide studies and needs assessments, and to work collaboratively in efforts to improve the provision of services to American Indians with disabilities.

III. WDVR Agrees To:

- A.** Provide technical assistance and consultation regarding case service issues and documentation requirement to CMN VR.

- B.** Provide services to mutual consumers of CMN VR and consider them eligible for WDVR services if they are certified eligible by CMN VR.
- C.** Assign VR counseling staff as liaison to the CMN VR, and to provide direct services to CMN VR referred consumers.
- D.** Continue to provide training to WDVR counselors and specifically, it's liaison counseling staff so that referrals from CMN VR will be served in a timely manner. Provide additional training to WDVR staff on American Indian cultural issues and concerns to promote sensitivity to the special needs of this consumers' population.

IV. CMN VR Agrees To:

- A.** Utilize a service delivery system similar to the system used by WDVR. This will assure the provision and transition of services for mutual consumers and be responsible to reporting requirements under the Section 121 grant criteria.
- B.** As part of CMN VR outreach efforts, non-tribal, disabled consumers who reside within the CMN VR Service Area, and have been identified by the CMN VR as eligible for WDVR services, will be referred to WDVR.
- C.** Seek technical assistance from WDVR as appropriate.
- D.** Provide cultural sensitivity, and other culturally relevant training on issues of concern to American Indians to WDVR liaison, and other staff.

We accept the statements above as defining the working relationship between WDVR and CMN VR in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians with disabilities.

For WDVR:

Charlene Dwyer

DVR Administrator: _____ **Date:** _____

For CMN VR:

S. Verna Fowler, Ph.D

President, College of the Menominee Nation:

_____ **Date:** _____