

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT (CSPD)

(1) DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

The DVR tracks and maintains staffing information by classification, vacancy rate and information to determine the statewide deployment of positions based on census population data. This information is updated regularly and reviewed at least quarterly.

The DVR has taken action to ensure sufficient staff to serve the caseload based on the projected number of consumers with active individualized employment plans (IPEs). Throughout the period governed by the WIOA State Plan, the statewide average of active IPEs will not be more than 100 per counselor, recognizing that the average case work activity includes an additional 20-25% of consumers in applicant and plan development status.

Eligibility Pilot: Beginning in 2015, DVR contracted with the University of Wisconsin-Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) for an eligibility review process, authorizing SVRI to collect and make recommendations to appropriate DVR staff for eligibility and OOS determinations. This pilot is anticipated to free up to 15% of the counselor's time to refocus on direct consumer employment plan activities. This pilot, therefore, anticipates that additional staff will be retained who experience "case burnout" from process activities.

(A) Qualified personnel needs

The data in Table 1 shows the number of permanent authorized FTEs by personnel category and the current vacancies in each category as of April 2014. However, we anticipate a vacancy rate of 5% during the 5 year projection period, (combination of past and current budget instructions). DVR anticipates maintaining adequate resources both in fiscal and staff resources to ensure a sustainable caseload. In December 2013, Act 58 provided funding for 9 additional VR Counselor positions.

Table 1

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	VR Counselor	196	10
2	Consumer Case Coordinator	69	3
3	Field Managers/Supervisors	25	1
4	Central Office Senior Leadership/ Managers	7	3

5	Central Office Staff Support	25	1
6	Total	322	18

DVR will continue to maintain an average employment plan caseload of 16,500, not to exceed 17,000, during FFY 2016-20. During the 5 year caseload projection period, the counselor caseload ratio should continue to comply with the DVR's goal of not more than 100 consumers with active IPEs per counselor per month, recognizing that another 20-25% are individuals in applicant or plan development status.

(B) Personnel development

(i) Institutions of Higher Education (IHE)

The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) issues licenses for professional counselors, including vocational rehabilitation counselors. There are currently two Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) in Wisconsin that maintain Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) accreditation and are recognized by the DSPS. These are the University of Wisconsin - Madison and the University of Wisconsin – Stout, which offers campus-based and distance learning master's level programs.

There are two state university counselor preparation programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) that are also recognized by the DSPS and that matriculate graduate level students in general counseling and related areas. The University of Wisconsin campuses at Oshkosh and Whitewater have CACREP accredited programs.

The DSPS also recognizes and posts on its website other pre-approved graduate degree programs that meet General Counseling equivalency standards for licensure in Wisconsin. Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) in Wisconsin must complete a minimum of thirty hours of continuing education hours every two years out of which four hours must be in the area of Boundaries and Ethics. The DSPS website is: <http://dsps.wi.gov/Home> .

DVR has also contracted for additional on-line continuing education opportunities, including training relating to counselor ethics.

(ii) Number of Students

The University of Wisconsin - Madison Rehabilitation Psychology Graduate Program reported 21 students currently enrolled in their master's degree program. The University of Wisconsin- Stout indicated a total of 71 students currently enrolled in the master's degree program in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling for the academic year.

The University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh reported a total of 85 students currently enrolled in the three tracks of Community Counseling, School Counseling and Student Affairs. The

University of Wisconsin- Whitewater's enrollment for the current school year is 120 students enrolled in Community Counseling, School Counseling and Higher Education areas of emphasis.

(iii) Number of Graduates

The DVR maintains information on universities from which new counselor hires graduate.

Graduates of the two CORE campuses (Madison and Stout) are eligible for or will have earned CRC certification and eligibility for the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Wisconsin.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison graduated 27 Rehabilitation Psychology students in the master's program for academic year. The University of Wisconsin-Stout reported 25 students annually graduating from their MS VR program. All graduates are eligible to apply for the CRC and or LPC training certificate. 18 students are projected to graduate from the UW Stout MS VR program annually and 33 are projected to graduate from the program annually.

The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh reported 8 annual graduates for the school year that will be eligible to receive CRC or professional counselor-in-training licensure, with 3 of those graduating from the Community Counseling program. UW Whitewater reported a total of 28 students graduating annually from their counseling graduate programs of which 14 were from the Community Counseling program and eligible to seek counselor-in-training licensure, and 12 graduates in School Counseling able to seek licensure as school counselors.

Students who graduate from counseling programs that are not pre-approved by the Department of Safety and Professional Services must have their educational course work reviewed individually by the Department of Safety and Professional Services prior to issuance of a license or in-training license.

Summary data for the four university counselor preparation programs is in Table 2 by number of graduates for (to provide an annual snapshot) 2012-2013 school year and enrollments for the 2013-2014 school year.

Table 2

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	University of Wisconsin – Madison Rehab Psych	21	NA	NA	27
2	University of Wisconsin – Stout MS VR Program	71	NA	NA	25
3	University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh Community Counseling School Counseling Student Affairs	32 38 15	NA	NA	3 4 1
4	University of Wisconsin- Whitewater Community Counseling School Counseling Higher Education	55 47 18	NA	NA	14 12 2

(2) Plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel.

The DVR uses various methods to regularly monitor and plan for the recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel to meet caseload obligations.

Examples of these tools are:

- Caseload Projection Table (Monthly)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Staff Resources Analysis with current census data (updated as vacancies occur)
- DVR Staff Vacancy Report (updated as vacancies occur)
- Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) staff resources allocation goals by county (updated quarterly)

In addition, Human Resource staff track annual hiring data based on the number of professional counselor hires by their school of graduation.

Allocation of staff by classification is done in a manner proportionate to the demographic area they cover. Each geographic area or Workforce Development Area (WDA) is allocated the same percentage of staff assigned to cover it as is represented by the population base in that area compared to the statewide population. For the past several years, as positions are filled, the DVR has realigned the staff complement of an area to meet the staffing plan requirements for Counselor and Case Coordinator positions. The plan includes a minimum level of administrative staffing in the Central Office to maximize ability to meet resource needs in the field. Following a multi-year 40% reduction in central administration and supervisory staff, the central administration staffing allocation is 10% and field supervision staffing is 9% for a combined 19% allocation for non-direct services.

In its recruitment materials and practices, DVR requires that applicants for vocational rehabilitation counselor positions meet the standards for employment as specified in the Wisconsin State licensure statutes. Only applicants who meet the hiring standards are interviewed and hired. For example, during FFY15, the DVR developed and used recruitment material focused on opportunities in Wisconsin for Licensed Professional Counselors. Entry level VR Counselors must have a valid "Licensed Professional Counselor" or "Licensed Professional Counselor in Training" credential from the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing before they start employment with the agency. This is a State requirement for those who practice as Professional Counselors.

The DVR holds a seat on the Wisconsin State License Review Board and the DVR review board member clarifies and promotes the interests and needs of the DVR for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified staff.

The DVR's hiring plan includes coordination of job announcement postings with diverse entities in the state, including partners in the One-stop system, professional organizations and accredited university programs. DVR actively recruits rehabilitation counselor graduate school students for internships with the agency throughout the school year, and provides student practicum sites. Several of the VR Counselor In-Training hires have been past interns or practicum students. The DVR seeks to attract candidates from other states as part of its hiring strategies. For internships, the DVR will continue to target University programs that attract a high complement of diverse students, including individuals with disabilities.

Job announcements are posted with various media serving minority groups and advertised across partners in the One-stop system, some of whom specialize in services to target groups. The DVR has had success in outreach recruitment efforts resulting in an increase in the number of qualified minority applicants.

The DVR regularly evaluates and modifies its recruitment efforts and in-service training plan to ensure that all personnel, in particular vocational rehabilitation counselors, meet the highest requirements of the State applicable to their job classification. Retention of staff is a key element of succession planning, and DVR management regularly reviews and updates its succession plan.

DVR recently added a new VRC classification: VRC Advanced. This classification addresses senior VRCs who offer mentoring; provide clinical supervision, as well as other duties. DVR has a target to hire 20 VRC Advanced positions as openings become available. These positions are allocated based on staff distribution throughout the state. These are not additional positions but are conversions of current VR Counselor positions. In FFY 16, DVR is expected to complete its recruitment for these positions.

DVR must also turn its attention to retention of new staff that often receive their initial employment with VR but often are being recruited away to other institutions for higher salaries. DVR senior leaders will work with the department's human resources staff to focus on retention efforts that will adequately compensate and reflect VR experience for compensation adjustment. DVR leaders will also look for additional tools that augment compensation packages that also address retention efforts.

(3) Personnel Standards - basis for establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure all employed personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained.

The personnel standards for vocational rehabilitation counselors in Wisconsin are established upon the highest requirement in the State, Chapter 457 of the Wisconsin State statutes licensure requirements for the title of "Professional Counselor". Under these rules, individuals who practice professional counseling must have a state license or hold a temporary license or training certificate. Counselors must have a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or closely related fields, 3,000 hours of post master's degree clinical supervision, pass the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) exam or the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) exam, and pass the Wisconsin licensure examination. This is the state personnel standard which exceeds the national standard.

All VR Counselors employed by DVR since May 1992 meet the State required standards for licensure as a condition of employment, including continuing education requirements which all licensed Professional Counselors must maintain, including requirements for courses in professional counselor ethics and boundaries. Opportunity for continuing education is open to all professional rehabilitation counselor staff.

- (1) Personnel standards for paraprofessional staff are established by the DVR and the State of Wisconsin. Paraprofessional staffs are required to take and pass an online exam consistent with classification requirements. Opportunity for continuing education courses is open to all paraprofessional staff in addition to the professional rehabilitation counselor staff.

The DVR provides and requires that all newly hired staff participate in a comprehensive orientation and training program that occurs early in his/her employment.

(4) Staff development

(A) System of staff development for professional and paraprofessional staff within the designated State unit.

The educational needs for DVR personnel are determined based on input from several different sources. These sources include but are not limited to:

- RSA regulatory language (34CFR Part 361)
- Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code (Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services)
- Comprehensive Training Needs Assessment
- Professional State Councils, (e.g., Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council), and
- Individual Performance Reviews

The DVR conducts a comprehensive training needs assessment every three years using a survey instrument administered by WDVR. The Department of Workforce Development (the DSA) also conducts staff training needs assessment and offers training based on this evaluation. The DVR obtains input on training needs from various State Councils and organizations, primarily the state rehabilitation council (WRC) and Rehabilitation for Wisconsin (RFW). Computerized training records are kept for each employee. Annual employee "goals and accomplishment reviews" (GARS) are conducted by management with each employee. The individual reviews help the DVR identify where additional training is needed, and for which staff.

Wisconsin statutes and administrative code outline specific training needs based upon licensure requirements for vocational rehabilitation counselors, in order to practice in the State of Wisconsin. The Division maintains a membership with the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), which allows the awarding of continuing education hours to staff at no cost to the staff member. Continuing education hours are essential to the counselors to maintain State licensure. DVR may direct the employee to attend training, providing all expenses are paid.

To minimize staff turnover and promote leadership development, all staff are encouraged, and as appropriate, funded to participate in capacity building training activities. In addition, DVR provides training to statewide management staff at bi-monthly meetings. Through a paid annual application to Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), the Division is granted the ability to pre-approve continuing education hours for participants in training programs it conducts or coordinates.

The DVR has consolidated New Employee Orientation and Comprehensive Staff Training into one multi-day training event entitled Comprehensive New Staff Training. This training program examines the DVR process from point of referral and application through closure/follow-along. The program also incorporates material on rehabilitation technology resources, effective counseling and assessment practices, and other key components for successful rehabilitation outcomes. Staff with various positions participate in designing and

updating the training curriculum and content presentations, and are involved in delivering the training. The comprehensive staff training program brings a mix of staff classifications together in one group upon hire or soon thereafter, as a means to increase the consistency in how VR services are delivered throughout the DVR.

Paraprofessional staff are jointly and individually mentored on case management and related VR services in accordance with their job descriptions and performance expectations. The DVR continues to assure all professional staff understand and are trained to meet job description performance standards.

DVR utilizes statewide or bi-regional meetings to provide staff training on DVR policy and processes as well as collaboration, motivational interviewing, and wellness. DVR will continue to provide these all staff opportunities dependent on staff time and funding resources as part of a professional development program.

Specific attention will continue to updating and incorporating vocational counseling, job placement; rehabilitation technology and assessment tools and practices into the training curriculum. The DVR collaborates with UW-Stout and Independent Living Centers to offer Assistive Technology training to DVR consumers and staff at venues across the state. The DVR will continue to emphasize use of rehabilitation technology services and resources in presentations to professional and paraprofessional staff. To identify and access training material (including online formats) available from a variety of Wisconsin resources as well as other VR agencies. The DVR will continue to seek resources from RSA through its technical assistance offerings as needed.

DVR participated in a research study, which looked at Motivational Interviewing skills and how those skills impact the relationship between consumers and the VR counselor. This study was sponsored by TACE5 and supported by University of Wisconsin Madison and several private consultants. Since FFY 2013 over 188 counselors, 27 DVR supervisors and several Central Office Staff were trained. The results of this research have shown Motivational Interviewing to be very promising and DVR will continue to provide training as both a professional development tool as well as a counselor retention effort.

In addition, new supervisors are required to attend supervisory trainings offered by the Wisconsin Office of State Employment Relations. DVR has implemented training targeted at staff which has demonstrated supervisory skills which may play an important role when future manager positions open. Staff members are selectively sponsored for advanced management and leadership training through WI Enterprise Management Development Academy. Over the past several years DVR has also supported sending 1-2 managers/year to attend the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute. In addition, the DVR provides on-going training for all managers at supervisory administrative meetings.

(B) Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated state unit staff.

The DVR developed a system, called the *Information Center* that provides access to VR regulatory and program policy information on key issues and topics of relevance to program

staff, consumers, and the general public. This online resource promotes consumer informed choice and ready access to key VR information for staff in the remotest of locations. The *Information Center* includes VR federal and state requirements and rules, policy interpretations, procedures, guidance information and informational items in user-friendly Question & Answer formats. A web search feature is available. The *Information Center* cross-references and indexes all the policies, directives and related guidance affecting the vocational rehabilitation program. Before posting to the DVR website and the *Information Center*, DVR policy and written guidance pieces are reviewed and approved by the DVR's Policy Academy and the DVR Senior leadership Team. The Policy Academy is composed of a cross section of professional and paraprofessional staff, as well as management staff. VR policy analyst staff review and revise the material to keep it up-to-date and correct. The *Information Center* link is: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/infocenter/default.htm>

There are two full-time VR policy analysts who provide ongoing technical assistance, consultation and training to statewide staff on issues of service delivery as mandated by the Rehabilitation Act. The policy analysts also develop guidance and best practices for staff by researching other state practices, conducting literature reviews, and researching state and federal laws.

The policy analysts also participate in the DVR's Policy Academy comprised of field representatives from each Workforce Development Area (WDAs) and DVR senior leadership. The purpose of the Policy Academy is to address and develop policy and guidance pieces and background information on topics pertinent to the practice of vocational rehabilitation in Wisconsin. Members of the Policy Academy take the information from these meetings back to their respective Workforce Development Areas (WDA) to disseminate to staff.

As a critical component of training, meetings are periodically scheduled for DVR WDA Directors and Supervisors during which various training topics are addressed. In a "train the trainer" model, WDA Directors and Supervisors are then responsible for training local field staff and recording the training event in the minutes of their WDA meetings.

A link to the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) website hosted by Utah State University is available from the DVR's Training Opportunities web page. The NCRTM site includes a digital library with research and resource material as well as opportunities for continuing education credits online, etc. Information from the Clearinghouse is periodically brought to the attention of staff statewide. Staff can also access research information disseminated through teleconferences and webinars sponsored by the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration as well as the national network of disability research and training entities.

Research findings and promising techniques are shared with staff through the DVR's Rehabilitation Resource newsletter, and introduced in staff trainings with an emphasis on translation to VR service delivery practice. The VR policy analysts contribute to research development and translation of research into program and policy changes. The comprehensive training program for new staff incorporates and translates research findings into effective VR practice.

Research findings are also utilized in project and grant development activities initiated by the DVR. One example is the use of data from research and other sources in the development of technical specifications for service provider agreements, transition, assistive technology and supported employment special projects. The DVR uses research findings to strengthen service quality efforts. These results are shared with the Policy Academy and other staff to inform agency changes and improvements. The DVR's website contains links to pertinent research information and scheduled training opportunities from internal and external sources. Web training resources are updated and disseminated to staff through the DVR Rehabilitation Resource newsletter as well as via e-mailed communications.

In particular, continuing education opportunities relative to research findings are made available through the dissemination of published materials, and access to webinars and on-site training sponsored by leading Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) such as the Virginia Commonwealth University RRTC on workplace supports and job retention, Mississippi RRTC on Blindness and Low Vision; The Institute for Community Inclusion VR RRTC, The Cornell RRTC on Disability demographics and statistics, and the Hunter College RRTC on Improving Employment Outcomes. In addition, the research and practice-based publications from the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI monographs) are shared with VR staff and management. DVR staffs also participate in training seminars and webinars sponsored by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The DVR will continue to emphasize the need to use and apply research when developing guidance, best practices, and staff trainings. When guidance and best practices are developed, they will continue to be vetted through the Policy Academy and disseminated to staff through various means including emails, staff and management meetings, inclusion on the DVR's internal web site and in the current *Information Center* or updated version. As needed, specific staff training will also be developed and provided.

The DVR is also part of the PROMISE Grant initiative. The research findings and evidenced based practice will be shared with staff as a result of the grant.

(5) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

The DVR maintains the ability to communicate with customers in their preferred mode using a variety of resources. Designated staffs maintain and coordinate foreign language translation and interpreter lists, including remote and on site CART services.

The DVR affirmatively recruits staff fluent in Spanish and American Sign Language. The DVR maintains relationships with providers for both oral and written translations in over 60 languages. Oral translations are available, on demand, via a telephone connection. Translations in Spanish and Hmong of the DVR's most frequently used publications and forms are available as print-on-demand from the public website. Audio-taped materials are available via a contracted provider. The DVR maintains in-house technology to prepare Brailled and large print materials.

6) Activities undertaken to coordinate the system of personnel development with personnel development activities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The DVR updated the interagency agreement with the state's Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in December of 2010. The agreement also includes the Department of Health Services (DHS), Division of Long Term Care, Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and Division of Public Health. This agreement describes the roles and responsibilities of the tri-agency state partnership which includes the DVR, DPI, and DHS with respect to supports and services to youth-in-transition from high school and adults with disabilities who have an expectation for integrated competitive employment.

A Transition Action Guide (TAG) is a guide for all stakeholders involved in the delivery of transition services and outlines the inter-agency team member roles, and responsibilities in the transition process. The TAG also includes effective practices, resources, and service information. As this document is used in practice, stakeholder feedback and suggestions are collected and updates are made.

To further support the interagency agreement and the TAG, the tri-agency partners have committed to participating in quarterly meetings to review information, provide updates and discuss and resolve issues. In addition, the interagency team will provide trainings to our respective staff throughout the state. The agreement and supporting documents continue to be shared by DVR staff at conferences for education professionals, vocational rehabilitation professionals, and long term support professionals. A DVR staff person will be a member of the planning committee of the annual statewide Rehabilitation & Transition Conference as part of the continued effort to educate stakeholders.

The DVR, DPI, and DHS will continue joint sponsorship of training events focused on improving transition and vocational rehabilitation services. In addition to the agreement-specific training, DVR staffs are encouraged to attend other transition-focused trainings to increase their knowledge of transition issues and processes. The DVR supports attendance of staff at the annual Wisconsin Transition Conference, Employment First, Transition Academy and the annual Rehabilitation and Transition Conference, as a means to increase coordination of services and transition service delivery skills.

The DVR's Statewide Transition Action and Resource Team (START), consisting of one primary and one alternate representative from each of the 11 VR workforce development service areas, act as local transition experts and technical assistance resource. START members will continue to provide training, technical assistance and consultation to staff in their respective service areas. The team's goals also include improving individualized engagement of students with disabilities and their parents in the transition/ VR process as well as increasing engagement of schools in transition services. A continued focus for the START team will be to identify specific needs of DVR staff related to the provision of services to transition-aged youth and develop strategies and tools to address those needs.

The DVR will continue to designate a liaison counselor to each school identified by Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction (DPI) as a referral source for DVR applicants.

DVR liaison staff work with educators and parents in providing information related to the interagency agreement as well as information on DVR services.