
**VR Counselors in Training –
1,000 Face-to-Face Hours (Alternative Methods)
(Effective February 2004)
(Revised July 2014)**

BACKGROUND:

DVR's Senior Management had received feedback that new VR counselors in training were having a difficult time in accumulating 1,000 hours in face-to-face contact with consumers due to OOS and other variables that were not under the control of the counselor.

It was requested that DVR contact the Department of Regulation and Licensing to see what alternatives were available to meet the 1,000 face-to-face contact hours. The following was submitted by Joseph D'Costa.

REQUEST TO REGULATION AND LICENSING MADE IN NOVEMBER OF 2003

To: Schweitzer, John
Subject: Professional Counselor Board Agenda Request

Mr. Schweitzer on behalf of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) I am requesting the following agenda items be considered at the next professional counselor section meeting:

1. DVR is requesting that the face-to-face hours as required in MPSW 12.01 (1) take into consideration the following technology options that are available for sensory impaired clients. DVR is funding a Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) service at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee campus. Due to lack of available sign language interpreters, VRI allows three way communications between the deaf consumer, DVR counselor and an interpreter who are in different locations but using the internet web camera to see each other on a screen and communicate. DVR is requesting that due to this type of technology being the acceptable method of communication, VR counselors in training be allowed to count these hours towards the 1,000 face-to-face hours as required under MPSW 12.01 (1).
2. DVR is requesting that the Professional Counselor Board allow VR counselors in training to count face-to-face hours where the method of contact is via the phone or the internet.
 - a) Some of our DVR consumers who are deaf cannot use the phone without going through the relay service. These consumers send e-mail messages that the DVR counselor responds to by providing advice, problem solving suggestions, or referral to an alternative health care provider. These types of contacts are saved and become part of the case record. These types of contacts are disability related and we would appreciate the board approving these alternative methods of contact to count towards the 1,000 face-to-face contact.

- b) DVR counselors in training often receive phone calls from their consumers who are having difficulties at work with a supervisor or a colleague. Counselors discuss strategies on disability disclosure and what is required under the ADA. Stabilizing the consumer on the job is a bread and butter responsibility that is DVR's mission. These types of contacts are documented in our case record.

- c) DVR counselors in training coordinate the scope of services that are listed on an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Example: For a DVR consumer that is in a supported employment placement, staff meetings are often held between the DVR counselor, the Community Rehabilitation Provider or the consumer's representative. In a previous request that was made by DVR, the professional counselor section approved contacts with the consumer's representative as defined in MPSW 10.01 (1). MPSW 10.01 (1) is silent on some of the entities that DVR counselors coordinate scope of services on behalf of the consumer. It is my humble opinion that DVR counselors are providing a professional service coordinating scope of services. A health care provider licensed under ch. 455 coordinates a treatment plan with a sub-specialist, occupational therapist or a physical therapist. We are requesting that these types of contacts be acceptable to meet the 1,000 face-to-face contact hours as required under MPSW 12.01 (1).

In summary, the 1,000 face-to-face hours is a valid benchmark to allow junior counselors to learn the trade. DVR is requesting that the Professional Counselor Section allow DVR counselors in training to receive credit for alternative sources of contact to satisfy MPSW 12.01 (1).

Thank you for scheduling these agenda items.

OUTCOME OF REQUEST:

QUESTION REGARDING FACE-TO-FACE:

The Section reviewed a question submitted to John Schweitzer, Legal Counsel, by Joseph D'Costa from DVR regarding face-to-face contact.

MOTION: LaMarr Franklin moved, seconded by Susan Kell, to approve the request to allow DVR counselors in training to receive credit for alternative sources of face-to-face contact. Motion carried unanimously.

The December 2003 board's minutes were accepted on February 11, 2004. Therefore, effective February 11, 2004, VR Counselors in training can receive alternative credit for face-to-face hours as identified in the above request.

FOLLOW UP TRAINING:

DVR management recognized the importance of obtaining the above privilege and to insure that staff and clinical supervisors will make sure that there is adequate documentation in the case record when alternate types of contact's are made and VR Counselors In Training wish to receive credit. A teleconference for all VR Counselors was held in March of 2004.