

The Oneida Indian Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Cooperative Agreement

Introduction:

- A. Parties Involved** – The Department of Workforce Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (hereinafter referred to as "DVR") and the Oneida Indian Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program (hereinafter referred to as "OVRs"), known collectively as the Parties.
- B. Purpose** – This Cooperative Agreement is between DVR and OVRs. The purpose of the Cooperative Agreement is 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 Oneida Reservation. Per the regulations of Section 121, the phrase "on or near" shall be more specifically defined by Oneida VR and shall hereinafter be referred as the Oneida VR Services Area. The Oneida VR Services Area is within Brown and Outagamie Counties.

DVR has the responsibility to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all qualified individuals in the State of Wisconsin. However, OVRs is the recipient of a "Section 121" grant with the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, which enables OVRs to provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indian individuals with disabilities residing within Oneida 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 of Wisconsin 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 DVR and the Oneida Nation, this is the renewal of the Cooperative Agreement which outlines the provision of services to disabled American Indian participants who reside within the tribally defined Oneida VR service area. This agreement shall be effective on the date that it is fully executed by the Parties and renewed annually.

Modifications to this Agreement must be mutually agreed upon between the parties, signed and dated in writing.

Joint Agreement

The Parties Mutually Agree:

- A.** To have regular meetings between the staff of DVR and OVRs for the purpose of collaboration in delivering services to qualified applicants and participants.
- B.** To cooperate in the operation of a system of service provision which ensures a smooth interface and sharing of cases and information between DVR and OVRs.
- C.** Upon initial contact with a new participant, the DVR counselor, or the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) counselor shall offer to refer the participant to DVR if the counselor believes the participant may be eligible for services, in order to establish a joint case.
- D.** DVR and OVRs programs share the same eligibility criteria related to disability. After a participant, who is determined eligible by the DVR program or by OVRs, is referred for joint case development, the VR Counselor receiving the referral may use the referring agency's certificate of eligibility as well as other documentation in order to expedite the eligibility determination process. For referred participants, the expectation is that an eligibility determination will be made in less than 15 calendar days.
- E.** DVR and OVRs 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.
- F.** All participant evaluation results, medical and/or psychological records, school records, and other pertinent information shall be shared with each DVR and OVRs counselor with an open case after a release of information is signed by the participant granting permission for the agencies to share such information.
- G.** DVR and OVRs shall safeguard all consumer personal information and records to prevent inadvertent or unintentional disclosures. The applicable references for confidential information at the time of this Agreement are 34 CFR 361.38, Wis. Stat. § 47.02(7) and Wis. Admin. Code Ch. DWD 68.
- H.** After a participant is determined eligible by DVR and OVRs, a meeting shall be scheduled with the participant, the DVR counselor, and OVRs counselor. All parties shall work together to develop the participant's Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The participant will have separate IPEs with each program; however, each IPE shall reflect the services provided by DVR, OVRs, and any comparable benefits. Each VR Counselor may only provide and/or obligate services by the VR agency they represent.

- I. Individuals served by DVR and OVRs 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. DVR and OVRs will develop and participate in joint training, cooperative statewide studies and needs assessments, and will work collaboratively in efforts to improve the provision of services to American Indians with disabilities.

DVR Agrees to:

- A. Provide technical assistance and consultation regarding case service issues and documentation requirements to OVRs.
- B. Provide services to mutual participants of OVRs and DVR. Individuals who are certified eligible by OVRs shall be eligible for DVR services.
- C. Assign DVR counseling staff as a liaison to OVRs and provide direct services to OVRs referred participants.
- D. Continue to provide training to DVR counselors and specifically, DVR's liaison counseling staff so that referrals from OVRs are served in a timely manner.
- E. Provide additional training to DVR staff on American Indian cultural issues and concerns to promote sensitivity to the special needs of joint American Indian participants.

OVRs Agrees to:

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

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

For DVR:

DVR Administrator: Signed by:
Meredith Dressel Date: 4/2/2025
6792GD2399344D3...

For DWD:

Deputy Secretary: Signed by:
Pamela McGilivray Date: 4/9/2025
236276D77EED448...

For OVRs:

OVRs Program Director: Signed by:
Ernest L. Oberst Date: 4/10/2025
1D81893888914DA...