

DVR Parameters for Collaborative Partnerships for Services to Individuals and Groups to Increase Employment Outcomes of Persons with Significant Disabilities

Purpose: To provide parameters for the design and implementation of projects with external partners that expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services leading to quality employment outcomes for DVR consumers. In accordance with federal regulations, DVR has the discretion to provide funds to projects that demonstrate innovation and expansion of services to DVR consumers, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities. In order for projects to be considered for approval the following criteria must be met *before* the submission of a structured written proposal.

General Parameters

The proposed project must be an innovative change from the customary or typical services provided by the partner and have a **vocational rehabilitation** focus. (See Attachment A)

Service components that are established must be modified, adapted, expanded, or reconfigured to have a **vocational rehabilitation** focus leading to an employment outcome.

The services of a proposed project must be consistent with the findings of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment and other goals and priorities identified in the DVR State Plan - http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/state_plans/default.htm.

All State plan requirements and priorities, including a State's order of selection will apply to services provided under the partnership.

Program expenditures and staff providing services under the partnership arrangements are under the administrative oversight of DVR.

An employment outcome must be in the most integrated setting possible that is consistent with the consumer's informed choice. The consumer must also be compensated at or above the minimum wage and receive at least the customary wage and benefit level paid to other individuals performing similar work for the same employer (i.e., competitive employment).

If a service provided in a collaborative partnership does not comply with the statewideness requirement in Sec. 361.25, DVR may be required to obtain a waiver of statewideness prior to the provision of funding.

A guarantee is required that the DVR funds will not be used to supplant funding for existing services or cover the costs of otherwise comparable services and benefits, or the cost of services that another public entity is obligated to provide under Federal law, State law, or assigned responsibility under State policy. Exceptions are those vocational rehabilitation services specified in paragraph (5) (D) and in paragraphs (1) through (4) and (14) of section 103 (a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

Project services funded with VR funds must include a predetermined strategy for project service sustainability and a project funding conversion schedule, as determined by the DVR that may include the conversion of time limited project expenditures to DVR fee-for-service payments.

DVR Consumers may choose, based on informed choice, to participate in the project.

DVR does not guarantee the level of project service participation by DVR consumers.

Process

Complete submissions must be made to the DVR Program Development Specialist at:

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
201 East Washington Avenue
GEF-1, A-100
P.O. Box 7852
Madison, WI 53707-7852

I & E projects are funded by federal fiscal year 2011 (i.e., beginning October 1) are identified in the DVR State Plan, it is **important that project proposals for next FFY be submitted by May 1.** DVR will submit the State Plan to the Rehabilitation Services Administration in June for review and approval by September 30.

Incomplete submissions will be returned. A written approval or requested amendment will be provided in 20 business days.

Technical Assistance will be limited to submission process and completion of required materials.

Services to Individuals

In addition to the general perimeters above all of the following specific parameters must be met as indicated.

Services to individuals' projects must satisfy one or more of the following service delivery or capacity-building purposes

- (a) Existing vocational rehabilitation services which are
 - ✓ Reconfigured, modified or adapted to more effectively reach and deliver services to eligible VR consumers, especially those who are identified as underserved
 - ✓ expanded services to address an identified service gap or to achieve statewideness

- (b) New services that have a vocational rehabilitation focus (See Schedule A)

Services to Groups of Individuals

In addition to the general perimeters above all of the following specific parameters must be met as indicated.

Services to groups of individuals projects must satisfy one or more of the following service delivery or capacity-building purposes:

- (a) Existing vocational rehabilitation services which are
 - ✓ Reconfigured, modified or adapted to more effectively reach and deliver services to eligible VR consumers, especially those who are identified as underserved
 - ✓ expanded services to address an identified service gap or to achieve statewideness

- (b) New services that have a vocational rehabilitation focus (See Schedule A)

Services to groups project funding will:

- Be established whenever possible on a fee-for-service basis.
 - New or expanded service arrangements may be established under an alternative financing arrangement if the services are deemed sustainable with a conversion to fee-for-service within 2 years.
 - Exceptions to be approved by the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council based on a recommendation by WDVR.
- Provide for a competitive process, whenever feasible, when funds are distributed on a contract basis to service providers and not directly through a fee-for-service purchase order for an identified consumer.
- Be time-limited, performance-based and include standards for cost-effectiveness and increased efficiency.
 - This means a change from budget-based project funding to an emphasis on deliverables and employment outcomes.
 - Services to groups of individuals' projects will include "pay for performance" requirements with limited amounts of start-up funding when needed.
 - At the discretion of the DSU, unexpended funds will be used to either extend the length of a project, or moved into more productive ways of meeting project objectives.
- Create a new or expanded service and be no more than 2 years in length.
 - If the project is more than one year in length, it shall be reviewed at least annually based on availability of funding and the ability to meet performance expectations;
 - Extension exceptions to be approved by the Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council, or involve existing services which are reconfigured, modified or adapted to more effectively reach and deliver services to eligible VR consumers and which demonstrate that such an arrangement more effectively finances and delivers services to a common customer.
 - Such arrangements, at the discretion of the DSU, may be reviewed at least annually based on effectiveness as determined by the performance measures outlined in the arrangement.