

Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (General)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council (General)

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions; (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council maintain open lines of communication. The DVR Director and Deputy Director participate in SRC meetings. The Director reports key activities to the SRC as a regular agenda item at each meeting. The SRC is kept abreast of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as it relates to new performance standards and the combined state plan with the DET and WDB. The SRC frequently designates a representative to participate in the state budget process for DVR, attending the DOL Budget Hearings with the Office of Management and Budget and the Delaware Legislature's budget hearings before the Joint Finance Committee. The State Rehabilitation Council is invited to comment on the state plan as part of the annual plan development process. The SRC recommendations for DVR policy and program improvements to be reflected in the combined state plan are received during the annual Effectiveness Evaluation, and delineated below.

At the March 2019 meeting of the SRC, the membership was offered the opportunity to review documents, receive programmatic updates, and ask questions. This included consumer satisfaction information, and policy updates. It is noted that members of the SRC sit on the DVR Policy Committee and attend meetings and/or receive updates of all policies during the revision process. Subsequently, the SRC was asked to provide written input and recommendations. The format for their written input had been updated to reflect the priorities in WIOA.

Below are the numerical ratings and the unedited comments received at the meeting. The comments related to the effectiveness of DVR in reference to the goals and priorities identified on a scale of 1=low and 5=high are as follows:

Goal 1: Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities.

Builds Relationships with Business

4.625

Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment	4.0
Services support Financial Independence	4.25
Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory	4.75

Comments:

- Employment first
- Services to help people get off SSDI
- Was so happy no talk about sheltered workshops.
- I helped a 22 year old girl who was homeschooled her entire school career because mom didn't trust the school system and I couldn't be more impressed on how DVR has begun to help her #bridgebuilder #consumer driven
- It would be helpful for businesses to know/understand the benefits, etc. of hiring individuals with disabilities- e.g. Outreach services for corporations, small business, and the like. Great stuff here.
- Work being conducted is very high caliber.
- DVR provides employers with skills of people with disabilities and emphasis is placed on the needs of the employer.
- Over the years, employers now call DVR to address their needs for good employees.
- Parents still need additional education to not pull consumers from jobs based on decreases in funding when pay increases

Goal 2: Support training programs that reflect opportunities in the labor market.

Helps consumers to focus on their Career Pathways	4.5
Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials	4.125
Coordination with WIOA Partners	4.375

Comments:

- I liked how DVR is being a major player leaning on DOE for inclusion in career pathways.
- DVR works with numerous other agencies in preparing young people with disabilities for the work world.
- Sensitivity training to agencies and employers. It needs to be ramped up. It's an equally important part of making all training programs successful.
- Story-telling by clients, their experiences in the workforce can be very powerful with the employers (success stories).
- Parent/caregiver training (need more)
- Develop a cheat sheet of list of publications or resources they (parents/caregiver) can tap into.
- On website, design it where parents and caregivers can fill out form to be part of listservs or attend meetings or become committee members.
- Cheat sheet can be distributed to by DVR and given out by offices such as DVR, Social Security office or any partner organization (Advocacy cheat sheet).

- We should do more educating employers and parents regarding the services offered and partner services.

GOAL 3: Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.

Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services	4.167
Quality of Transition Services	4.167
Coordination with Partners (e.g. DOE & DDDS)	3.86

Comments:

- Do students with disabilities write up a summary or performance (self-reflection) after Pre-ETS program?
- Did they learn the required Pre-ETS components listed?
- Does Pre-ETS contractor complete self-evaluation?
- What are the student outcomes?
- Increase awareness of Project SEARCH.
- Increase awareness on how to lead your IEP meeting/self-advocacy instruction
 - Once capacity is built, coordinate with other students on how to do it, too.
- Student connections needs to be strengthen on why and how to do a student portfolio. It's not just an exercise to do it, but why.
- Raise awareness the every student with a disability needs authentic work-based learning before the age of 14. It's not just the right thing; it's best practice.
- Further education, future employment, and independent living
- The Delaware Transition Conference is a gem! Great place to learn self-determination.
- Education is the Lead Capacity Building agency for students with disabilities and families.
- Education raise awareness: HB 264 drivers
- Increase marketing and awareness of Pre-ETS to students with disabilities, families, and schools
- What is the follow-up from students regarding Pre-ETS experience? Do programs list the required WIOA Pre-ETS components?
- Does the student add Pre-ETS experience to their portfolio housed in student file at school? Who is making the connection with schools?
- Plus add more diversity for Pre-ETS: car dealership, how to get CDL (truck/bus), intro into (not legible) services, labor/construction
- What is the school's responsibility to continue capacity building from Pre-ETS experience?
- Availability is only 500/8500-9000
- Need student leadership council so we can utilize and expand experiences gained at Pre-ETS. How are we sharing these experiences with other students? We are always starting new. Where is sustainability succession building in students with disabilities?
- Is DVR consulting with LEAs on student transitions assessments or what they want to do and build Pre-ETS experience around data from these assessments?
- Support services for transition begins at the age of 14, providing training opportunities so that young people are more prepared to make a choice related to job opportunities and/or additional training.

Other Comments:

- VR counselors should involve in some training and works with deaf school and/or mainstream programs include their parents. Transition Conference is perfect for all teachers, parents and students and also Deaf Services can learn and understand the Supported Employment programs better.

2. the Designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and (General)

The following is the response to each of the unedited comments received at the March 2019 meeting. To reduce redundancy, several of the comments have been grouped together.

1. It would be helpful for businesses to know/understand the benefits, etc. of hiring individuals with disabilities- e.g. Outreach services for corporations, small business, and the like. Great stuff here.

Agency Response: DVR agree with this statement. Representative of DVR attend and will continue to attend meetings of the State and local Chambers of Commerce as well as the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in order to promote the hiring of people with disabilities. The Business Services Unit will also work with the National Employment Team of CSAVR in order to promote the hiring of people with disabilities on the national and local levels.

2. Parents still need additional education to not pull consumers from jobs based on decreases in funding when pay increases

Agency Response: DVR agrees with this statement. The comment reflects the need for increased access to benefits counseling, not only for DVR participants but also for their families and representatives. As DVR moves forward, increasing its connection to the Ticket to Work, Partnership Plus program, the long-term availability to benefits counseling will assist in providing needed information.

3. Sensitivity training to agencies and employers. It needs to be ramped up. It's an equally important part of making all training programs successful.

Agency Response: DVR agrees with this statement. Agencies have the responsibility to provide information to their staff about disability awareness and treating individuals with disabilities with respect. While not all DVR customers wish to disclose that they have a disability, when DVR staff or the staff of a DVR contractor have direct contact with employers, educating the employers is important. DVR staff will also continue to educate employers through their participation in employer organizations.

4. Parent/caregiver training (need more)
5. Develop a cheat sheet of list of publications or resources they (parents/caregiver) can tap into.
6. On website, design it where parents and caregivers can fill out form to be part of listservs or attend meetings or become committee members.
7. Cheat sheet can be distributed to by DVR and given out by offices such as DVR, Social Security office or any partner organization (Advocacy cheat sheet).
8. We should do more educating employers and parents regarding the services offered and partner services.

Agency Response: DVR agrees in principle to these statements. It is important that parents, guardians, and DVR staff have access to information and resources that will be of benefit to DVR

participants; however, information in printed format is often out-of-date as soon as it is printed and links on web sites are often broken. While DVR agrees that putting the information on resource sheets and our web site is useful, training people regarding what types of resources are available, how and where to look for information, and how to access resources is vital.

9. Do students with disabilities write up a summary or performance (self-reflection) after Pre-ETS program?
10. Did they learn the required Pre-ETS components listed?
11. Does Pre-ETS contractor complete self-evaluation?
12. What are the student outcomes?
13. What is the follow-up from students regarding Pre-ETS experience? Do programs list the required WIOA Pre-ETS components?
14. Does the student add Pre-ETS experience to their portfolio housed in student file at school? Who is making the connection with schools?
15. What is the school's responsibility to continue capacity building from Pre-ETS experience?

Agency Response: DVR agrees that accountability and follow-up are vital to the Pre-ETS process. When students participate in contracted Pre-ETS programs, the reports of individual progress on the Pre-ETS components are sent to the referral sources, often the schools, and to DVR. At DVR, the reports are received by a member of the DVR support staff who attaches the report to the student's Pre-ETS electronic casefile. The information is available to the Pre-ETS staff as well as the VR Counselor if the student chooses to pursue services. As not all districts create student portfolios and use of portfolios is uneven, not all Pre-ETS reports are present in student portfolios.

Pre-ETS service providers are required to send written monthly reports detailing the provision of the five core Pre-ETS services provided for each student participant. Prior to paying the service provider, the reports are reviewed and scanned into the student's file. The DVR contract administrator plans to initiate on-site evaluations.

16. Availability is only 500/8500-9000

Agency Response: DVR agrees that Pre-ETS programming needs to reach more students. While the program was documented to have reached approximately 500 students in FY 2018, the program reached over 1000 students in 2019 and continues to grow. DVR is increasing capacity through increasing the DVR staff and the contracted activities.

17. Is DVR consulting with LEAs on student transitions assessments or what they want to do and build Pre-ETS experience around data from these assessments?

Agency Response: DVR agrees in principle that consulting with the LEAs regarding the student transition assessments is worthwhile. Currently, the assessment documents and processes vary from district to district. In those districts where the transition assessments are completed and made available to the DVR Pre-ETS/transition staff, the assessments are utilized.

18. Increase marketing and awareness of Pre-ETS to students with disabilities, families, and schools

Agency Response: DVR agrees with this statement. To that end, DVR is working with schools to reach students and families as part of the IEP process as early as 7th grade. Also, DVR is making presentations and staffing information tables at conferences where students, parents/guardians, and school personnel will be in attendance, including the monthly Transition Cadre Meeting.

19. Plus add more diversity for Pre-ETS: car dealership, how to get CDL (truck/bus), intro into (not legible) services, labor/construction

Agency Response: DVR agrees with this statement. It is DVR's intention to expand the diversity of work experiences available through Pre-ETS in the next contract cycle.

20. Need student leadership council so we can utilize and expand experiences gained at Pre-ETS. How are we sharing these experiences with other students? We are always starting new. Where is sustainability succession building in students with disabilities?

Agency Response: DVR agrees that it is important for students to share their Pre-ETS experiences with other potential participants. While there is no leadership council, students share their Pre-ETS experiences with other student at the Annual Transition Conference and additionally share their experience with educators via the Transition Cadre meetings.

Support services for transition begins at the age of 14, providing training opportunities so that young people are more prepared to make a choice related to job opportunities and/or additional training.

21. Raise awareness the (sic) every student with a disability needs authentic work-based learning before the age of 14. It's not just the right thing; it's best practice.

Agency Response: DVR generally agrees that starting the Pre-ETS/transition process at or before age 14 is a best practice. DVR is providing information to students as early as their 7th grade IEP meetings in order to make parents/guardians and students aware of Pre-ETS programming. The Pre-ETS program within DVR does not currently have the capacity to provide every student with a disability with an authentic work-based learning situation by the 7th grade but agrees that a work-based learning program as a Pre-ETS service is valuable in promoting future employment success.

22. Increase awareness of Project SEARCH.

Agency Response: DVR agrees that it is important to promote Project SEARCH. To that end, DVR will promote the program at the Annual Transition Conference, through Transition Cadre meetings, through district and local school open houses, and through outreach at conferences throughout Delaware where students, parents/guardians, teachers, and other professionals are in attendance.

23. Increase awareness on how to lead your IEP meeting/self-advocacy instruction
- Once capacity is built, coordinate with other students on how to do it, too.
24. Student connections needs to be strengthen (sic) on why and how to do a student portfolio. It's not just an exercise to do it, but why

Agency Response: DVR agrees with this statement. Learning self-advocacy is a component of Pre-ETS activities, including learning to lead an IEP meeting and promoting oneself through a student portfolio. In addition to incorporating this learning into other Pre-ETS programs, self-advocacy is a key component of the Annual Transition Conference where students model their accomplishments and provide peer-to-peer examples of self-advocacy.

25. Further education, future employment, and independent living

Agency Response: DVR agrees that the three items indicated above are important to students with disabilities. Through Pre-ETS and Transition services, DVR assists students and transition-age youth to explore and pursue post-secondary education that leads to employment. Through community integrated employment, the participants have the potential to earn a wage that will enhance their ability to make choices on how they want to live independently in the community.

26. VR counselors should involve in some training and works with deaf school and/or mainstream programs include their parents. Transition Conference is perfect for all teachers, parents and students and also Deaf Services can learn and understand the Supported Employment programs better.

Agency Response: DVR agrees with these statements. An effort will be made to include students who are deaf, whether at the Delaware School for the Deaf or mainstreamed, and their parents/guardians into Pre-ETS and Transition activities. This includes insuring that the programs run by DVR or DVR contractors are programmatically accessible to students who require interpreters and/or other assistive technology to be fully included.

3. the designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations. (General)

DVR did not reject any of the SRC's recommendations.

b. Waiver of Statewideness

Delaware DVR does not request a waiver of statewideness

c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System. (General)

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

1. Federal, State, and local agencies and programs; (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) maintains relationships with other agencies, both public and private, that provide services to individuals with disabilities. DVR maintains cooperative agreements with public and private non-profit agencies such as programs that serve individuals with developmental disabilities, individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse disabilities, and community rehabilitation programs. Some of these agreements have been in effect for more than 20 years. The agreements provide for cooperation in key areas such as respective roles related to joint constituents, agency financial responsibilities including terms of reimbursement, liaison relationships to promote information flow, joint referral processes, and dispute resolution.

DVR maintains ongoing relationships with several councils throughout the state that have missions related to individuals with disabilities including the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD), the Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), the Governor's Commission on Community-Based Alternatives, the University of Delaware Center for Disability Studies, the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, and the Governor's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity (GCEEO). These councils address issues of common concern to the disability community. DVR's Director participates in the Governors Employment First Taskforce, which is responsible to monitor implementation of Delaware's Employment First Legislation. DVR participates with the SCPD, a coordinating council for all disability-related councils throughout the State. DVR participates on the DDC including its Advocacy and Outreach committee. DVR participates in the Governor's Task Force on Community Inclusion, a collaboration of state agencies, organizations and entities involved with issues relating to disabilities. The goal of the task force is to develop strategies to implement the Olmstead principals, to assist people with disabilities to live more independently in the community, and to align the state's service delivery system with that goal. This task force has supported implementation of Medicaid for People with Disabilities (Medicaid Buy-in) in Delaware, increased public transportation, and has recently supported development of the Pathways Medicaid waiver program for people with disabilities.

As required by the Rehabilitation Act, DVR developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the public institutions of higher education in Delaware, specifically, Delaware Technical and Community College (DTCC), Delaware State University, and the University of Delaware. DVR and DTCC have collaborated with a separate Memorandum of Understanding to provide supported education services to DVR clients who are enrolled in remedial education programs at DTCC. The program provides additional training in study skills, time management, study techniques, and accommodations necessary for students to be successful in the school environment.

Since 2011, DVR has had a memorandum of understanding with the Delaware Division of Social Services, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families with minor children under title IV-A of the Social Security Act (TANF) in order to: a. Determine the employment needs TANF recipients who have medical waivers through assessment and identifying services that foster employment and self-sufficiency. b. Create an unimpeded path of entry for eligible TANF recipients into DVR's programs directly from DSS and from other TANF funded employment and training providers. c. Create agreed

upon communication pathways between the Divisions that maintains regular communication regarding shared clients. d. To provide funding to DVR to provide additional supports to TANF recipients as determined by family circumstances.

In October of 2012 the Division of Social Services, the Delaware Economic Development Office, and DVR entered into a MOU to create the Advancement through Pardon and Expungement (APEX) program to address barriers to employment for consumers with criminal histories. The APEX program assists consumers in the process of expungement and pardon of a criminal history to reduce the barriers of employment to seek high quality high demand employment. Those consumers who are eligible under the law for expungement and/or pardon are assisted throughout the process by APEX via form completion, filing, payment of finger printing and court documents and representation at court expungement hearings and/or Pardon Board Reviews.

2. State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; (General)

Each county in Delaware has an Assistive Technology Resource Center (ATRC). The ATRCs acquire pieces of equipment that may be loaned to individuals so that they may try the equipment before it is purchased. DVR works in conjunction with the ATRCs to identify vocationally applicable equipment. DVR clients work with ATRC staff to assess the individuals' needs, select, and use equipment that, if used successfully, will enable the clients to participate in education/training or to perform their employment. Upon successful identification of assistive technology, a recommendation for the purchase of that equipment is given to DVR.

DVR has an active representative on the Assistive Technology Loan Advisory Board as required by the Assistive Technology Act. The board is coordinated through the Easter Seals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore. The representative attends the board's scheduled meetings, providing input into the running of the program, receiving information on the loans that have been made and reviewing the programs financial information with an eye on sustainability. The DVR representative also brings information about the loan program back to DVR.

3. Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; (General)

The AgrAbility Grant through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been a resource to DVR and rural Delawareans engaged in the State's agriculture labor sector. Those services assist consumers in concert with contracted service providers of assistive technology to support and enhance employment outcomes. The AgrAbility Grant through USDA was not renewed for Delaware. DVR has recently coordinated services through the Purdue University and was directed to a local vendor.

4. Noneducational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services have partnered to foster the development of a Young Adult Advisory Council. The council targets youth and young adults ages 16-25, who want to make a difference in their communities and who have lived experience with mental health. The Young Adult Advisory Council was developed to provide young adults with a meaningful opportunity to have a voice in decisions made about resources, policies and services that target their needs. Councils are run by and for young adults themselves, with the silent support of staff/organizations.

Youth who utilize the APEX program, referenced above, may regain access to Pell Grants for postsecondary education.

5. State use contracting programs. (General)

In Delaware, the State Use Law requires that State agencies purchase goods and services from specific organizations that promote the employment and financial self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities. DVR, following the State Use Law, procures goods and services through the Ability Network of Delaware.

d. Coordination with Education Officials (General)

Describe:

1. DSU's plans (General)

The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has a strong relationship established with many transition stakeholders throughout the state. DVR collaborates with the Delaware Department of Education (DOE), including the Exceptional Children Resources and Career & Technical Education Work Groups as well as with the Local Education Agencies and Charter Schools. DVR continues to participate in the Statewide Transition Council, the Delaware Community of Practice on Transition and the monthly DOE Cadre meetings. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with the DOE and other organizations on a variety of other initiatives to facilitate the transition process for students with disabilities. Some of these initiatives include the annual Transition Conference, Customized Employment Bootcamp, Project SEARCH, the Start on Success program (SOS), Early Start to Supported Employment (ESSE) and Intensive Technical Assistance from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). DVR and DOE, in collaboration with the Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI), the Delaware Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS), and the Developmental Disabilities Council plan and financially support the statewide Transition Conference which had over 900 attendees in 2019, half of whom were transition students. In 2019, DVR, DDDS and DOE held the semi-annual Customized Employment Bootcamp for school personnel, DVR staff, community rehabilitation program (CRP) staff, other state agency personnel, families and businesses. This is a long standing training program focused on employment strategies for working with individuals with disabilities, especially high school students and those requiring supported employment services.

The Start on Success Program (SOS) is a collaboration among a variety of partners including DVR, DOE, community businesses, local school districts and Humanim, a community rehabilitation program. The 2018-2019 school-year marked the sixth year of SOS which is a successful employment training program targeting three main factors for transition students: 1) Job Exploration, 2) Workplace Readiness, and 3) Work-based Learning. The major focus is a four-month paid internship in a business where students learn on site experience through various work opportunities. Students are mentored by current employees at the business and supported by SOS staff from Humanim and the VR Counselor. Three school districts have entered into MOUs with Humanim to contribute funding for the paid internships. Each school supports 10-15 students to participate in the program and DVR funds Humanim for the job exploration and workplace readiness workshops and on-site support for the internships. The businesses providing internship sites include multiple YMCA locations and two hospitals. The program has also expanded to offer a summer Pre-Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS) program to support student from any school district in the county during the summer months, where DVR provides funding to Humanim to support the paid work-based learning opportunity.

Project SEARCH is another example of a strong collaboration with DVR, DOE, local schools, businesses and a community rehabilitation provider. The program continues to serve students in 4 different businesses and all three counties in the 2018-2019 school year including Christiana Care Health Services (CCHS) in New Castle County, Bayhealth Hospital and the Delaware Department of

Transportation in Kent County and Nanticoke Hospital in Sussex County. Each site has a host school district providing the instructor and classroom support, however students from any district or school are encouraged to apply and have the ability to use the school choice process in order to participate through the host district. Delaware has been nationally recognized for the high rate of successful employment among the graduates of the CCHS, Delaware Department of Transportation and Bayhealth Project SEARCH sites. These three programs consistently achieve 80%-100% placement rates with each cohort of students. Two of these three sites have also received the "Superstars in Education" Award from the Delaware Chamber of Commerce.

In order to reach more transition students at a younger age (summer prior to senior year or younger), DVR has worked with many of the CRPs, training vendors, local businesses and a local university to develop summer and school-year programs specifically related to Pre-Employment Transition Service activities. In 2019, 10 providers were funded by DVR to offer 12 different programs including activities related to paid or unpaid internships and job shadows, career preparation, skills training and college exploration activities. These programs have the capacity to serve over 600 students statewide with most of them reaching their capacity. DVR works closely with the local schools to ensure students are informed of the opportunities available during the school year and summer break.

Continuous Improvement

a. Project Search/ Steering Committees exist for all Project SEARCH (PS) programs in Delaware and are comprised of representatives from each of the partners; the host business, DOE, DVR, Local Education Agency and provider agency. Although each program operates slightly differently, the committee meetings are held regularly, generally monthly, but no less than quarterly. The purpose of the committee is to monitor and evaluate the program based on adherence to the Memorandum of Understanding. The committee reviews roles and responsibilities, process and procedures, and the timeline of events to evaluate program effectiveness and efficiency. With all partners at the table on a regular basis, we have the ability to provide continuous program evaluation. When situations arise in which a change is required, the partners discuss options, the impact the change may have on the program and considerations for each individual partner. The Committee will consult with the PS on-site team to receive feedback and communicate changes for program implementation.

The PS on-site team consists of the instructor, para professional(s), skills trainers and the VR Counselor. The PS on-site team meets weekly to review operational needs, plan coverage, identify and address concerns, and facilitate communication and collaboration. A member of the Steering Committee meets with the PS on-site team at least monthly in order to maintain communication, evaluate the daily operations, and assist with identifying and resolving programmatic barriers.

The partners of the Start on Success (SOS) program also meet quarterly at a minimum. This committee includes representatives from the DOE, DVR, LEAs and the provider, Humanim. The committee's purpose is to evaluate the program, addressing the areas of program structure and timelines, funding and expansion, eligibility requirements, marketing and recruiting and student outcomes. The daily operations are often addressed by many of the same individuals, but may also include the VR Counselor and employment specialists.

Given the size of Delaware and the ability of all parties involved in PS and SOS to maintain regular contact, issues can be identified and addressed quickly. Some program sites are more established than others and there is a lot of opportunity to learn from those programs. Each program, however, is unique and requires continuous and thoughtful evaluation to establish, enhance or expand in order to provide effective and relevant services to students with disabilities.

b. Pre-Employment Transition Services. Since 2015, DVR has worked with local provider agencies to develop programming related to the 5 core Pre-Employment Transition Services for transition students ages 14-21 potentially eligible for DVR. In the summer of 2015, DVR was able to offer 11 different programs related to work-based learning experience, career exploration and employment readiness training, and exposure to opportunities for higher education. In 2016, that initiative was expanded to 20 summer and school year programs. In 2019, DVR scaled back to 7 programs, increasing the capacity of a few, but also hiring 4 internal Pre-Employment Career Counselors to work directly with the LEAs and the students. Pre-ETS Career Counselors meet with the LEAs to identify needs of the students and gaps in career preparation services. Together they develop a plan for which core Pre-ETS services are most needed and how they will be carried out. DVR prefers to work with the youngest age (14) eligible for Pre-ETS to help students develop a foundation of skills related to career interests and exploration, self-advocacy and disability awareness, but recognizes each school has different resources so DVR remains flexible to meet the needs of the students. The collaboration among DVR, DOE, the LEAs, Pre-ETS Career Counselors and providers has been exceptional with everyone seeing the value of connecting students to these opportunities. DVR monitors and evaluates the programs and services provided by the Pre-ETS Career Counselors, both formally and informally. On-site monitoring, observations, soliciting feedback from schools, students and families and using pre/post tests are all strategies used to evaluate the Pre-ETS services being provided. In addition, agencies and Pre-ETS Career Counselors are asked to collect information on each student participating, submit monthly reports or formal program summaries upon completion of the program. In addition to the more formal documentation, anecdotal information is shared by students, school staff and family members who see the benefits students gain by participating in these programs.

There is a lot of valuable information available and DVR continues to utilize the case management system to find the most effective way to track and share information on the students who participate in Pre-ETS services, especially if/when they do become DVR consumers. This is information that can be used by schools, the DVR Counselor, students themselves and any provider they may work with in the future. Due to the difficulty in sharing individual information, DVR sees this as an opportunity to encourage providers and Pre-ETS Career Counselors to help the students have a better understanding of their own strengths, barriers, disability and accommodation needs in order to develop and utilize their self-advocacy skills to the best of their ability.

c. Anticipated changing needs of TR/Pre-ETS students. Delaware DOE, DVR and LEAs participate in a monthly cadre meeting to share transition information, receive professional development and participate in collaborative transition planning. This has provided the “transition professionals” with valuable, first-hand feedback directly from stakeholders to stay informed and align services for students across all partner organizations.

In addition, Delaware has continued to work with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) to be an intensive technical assistance state. Utilizing the expertise and resources through NTACT as well as WINTAC and Y-TAC for evidence-based, effective and promising practices has helped Delaware as we work to better understand the needs of transition students and youth with disabilities and develop programming and planning for these young adults.

2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to: (General)

A. consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services; (General)

For the past four years, DVR has been a regular participant in the monthly DOE Cadre Meetings in which a majority of school districts and charter schools send teams ranging from Administrators, Special Education and Transition Coordinators, and middle and high school teachers from within their districts/charters. Since May 2015, DOE and DVR have held monthly cadres meeting with the districts and charter schools throughout the state with the purpose of establishing regular opportunities for planning and professional learning. At a minimum, the DVR Transition Coordinator and a staff member from each of the four DVR offices attends each meeting to provide schools with information and support related to DVR services for students with disabilities. It is an opportunity for all DVR Transition staff to receive training and technical assistance provided by DOE and for Counselors to work with teams from their assigned schools to develop goals for collaboration, allowing VR to be further integrated in the school processes, procedures and resources and enhancing transition services for students with disabilities at the state and local level. Throughout the school year, DVR works closely with the local schools to develop and participate in student and parent information sessions, career and college fairs and general transition fairs. These events serve to inform current consumers of DVR and transition services as well as to provide outreach to younger students and families who may not know about or be receiving VR services yet.

There is continued collaboration between DVR and Delaware Technical Community College (DTCC) in the initiative to provide intensive educational supports for graduating transition students enrolled in remedial programs at DTCC. The supported education project provides workshops in Math, English and Reading to transition youth, along with some additional specialized study skills training. Over the years, the initiative has grown from one campus to all of the four DTCC campuses statewide. DVR started a pilot program in New Castle County by providing a VR Counselor to work primarily on the Wilmington and Stanton DTCC campuses. This initiative began in August 2015 in order to provide additional VR supports to college students and allow the high school transition counselors to begin working with transition students prior to their Senior year. This initiative has been beneficial for students to receive more adequate supports while in college, but also to establish a stronger relationship with DVR and the community college. This is no longer considered a pilot as it has expanded to all 3 counties.

B. transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs; (General)

Delaware has a long history of collaboration between DVR and Education. The DVR Transition Coordinator works closely with the DOE Education Associate to facilitate meetings, develop training, and plan for transition services statewide. There are many opportunities for DVR to interact with DOE and LEAs/Charters whether through meetings, training, email or phone calls. In addition, DVR often participates in outreach events through the schools and other state agencies to insure students and families are familiar with a variety of transition related services and resources including pre-employment transition services for potentially eligible transition students who have IEPs and 504 plans. Regular communication is encouraged and supported to insure proper outreach and connection to services that are critical to the successful transition of students with disabilities.

The cooperative agreement insures DVR is part of the School Transition Team and provides all entities with regular opportunities to share information and provide technical assistance and outreach to students and support students with their post-school goals. Due to the structure of the DVR transition program in which VR Counselors are assigned to schools, and in order to insure

timely eligibility determinations and development of individualized plans for employment, there is regular interaction between DVR, transition students, and school personnel. DVR Transition Counselors work with the students, primarily in the schools, to develop their Individualized Plan for Employment and plan for services related to their post-high school employment goals and to provide students with career exploration and vocational counseling and guidance, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. Counselors have, at minimum, monthly meetings with students at the schools; they participate in IEP meetings (in-person, by phone or by providing information to be shared) and have regular opportunities to communicate with school personnel. DVR Transition Counselors participate in Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings to explain services and make recommendations to assist the student, family and school staff with transition planning and career preparation. School personnel assist Counselors with obtaining space within the school and accessing students during the school day. Information is easily shared among all the parties and allows for everyone involved to be aware of and supporting the student's plan and goals.

C. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) within the Department of Labor holds an interagency agreement with the Exceptional Children & Early Childhood Education Group, Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), Local Education Agencies (LEA) and Charter Schools. The agreement outlines the commitment of DVR and DDOE to ensure the transition of individuals who are potentially eligible for DVR services from the receipt of educational services to vocational rehabilitation services in a programmatically sound manner which reduces the disruption of services to the individual. As outlined in the Interagency Agreement between DVR and DDOE, the educational and vocational training of students ages 3-21 who are eligible for special education and related services is the responsibility of the education system prior to graduation. Local Education Agencies (LEA) and Charter Schools are to provide effective secondary education programs to students with disabilities and ensure they are linked to appropriate adult services prior to leaving the school system. LEAs and Charter Schools are responsible for identifying a transition team to oversee and facilitate the transition process for the qualifying students. In regard to the coordination of education and vocational rehabilitation services, the transition team will inform students and their parents of DVR as early as a student's initial IEP. The LEAs and Charter Schools will coordinate with and invite DVR Counselors to IEP and other transition planning meetings to develop, implement and monitor the transition process.

Although DVR maintains no absolute lower age limit for eligibility, vocational rehabilitation services are generally offered to students between the ages of 16 and 21 with the exception of pre-employment transition services which may begin at age 14. LEAs and Charter Schools will ensure informed written consent for release of information is obtained from students and/or parents prior to referring a student to DVR or inviting DVR to an IEP or planning meeting and typically will make referrals to DVR in a student's Junior year of High School, or 2 years prior to exit for students participating in an 18-21 year old program. When special circumstances warrant, LEAs and Charters may refer a student prior to the Junior year. DVR will provide services for those students who are approaching, or are of working age (out of school) and who are determined by DVR to be eligible for services and not placed on the Order of Selection waiting list. DVR will assign a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) to all school programs serving students from grades 9-12. The VRC will maintain a regular schedule with each of their schools to maintain a cooperative working relationship and the LEA/Charter will provide locations within the schools for the VRC to meet with students and staff for planning purposes. The VRC works with the student to explore career opportunities, discuss post-school goals, and collaborate with the schools to develop and implement

additional vocationally related training and employment initiatives as needs of students are identified by the transition team.

The VRC will also collaborate with schools to address the needs of youth with disabilities at risk of dropping out of school and provide outreach to students potentially eligible for DVR. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with the DOE and other organizations on a variety of other initiatives to facilitate the transition process for students with disabilities and provide pre-employment transition services. Some of these initiatives include the annual Transition Conference, Customized Employment Bootcamp, Project SEARCH and the Start on Success program (SOS). The monthly cadre meetings and statewide transition meetings, in which all districts and VR Transition Staff are invited, are other opportunities to provide training and share information.

The cooperative agreement also outlines the financial responsibilities for both DVR and DOE. It emphasizes the adherence to the specific responsibilities of both agencies as delineated by their applicable rules and regulations. These responsibilities include the provision of services specified and required by each student's Individualized Education Plan and Individual Plan for Employment. In the development of these plans both agencies' staff will ensure that duplication of services, which could occur in instances where responsibilities overlap, does not occur. In cases where the primary responsibilities for those services would rest with the most appropriate agency, as determined by the student's status at that time, and when an agency is legally obligated and funded to provide that service. Nothing in the agreement relieves either agency of the responsibility to provide or pay for any transition service that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency. The strong relationship between DVR and DOE as well as with LEAs and Charter Schools has allowed for very successful sharing of resources to ensure transition services are provided in an efficient and effective manner.

D. procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services. (General)

The School to Work Transition Program at DVR consists of eight Transition Counselors four Pre-ETS Career Counselors and four Transition Assistants throughout the state. Each counselor is assigned to specific school districts, charters and non-public schools in order to ensure students with disabilities are receiving VR services prior to exiting from high school. VR Counselors work with the students, primarily in the schools, to develop their Individualized Plan for Employment and plan for services related to their post-high school employment goals and to provide students with career exploration and vocational counseling and guidance, including Pre-Employment Transition Services. In addition, VR Transition Counselors attend Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings to explain services and make recommendations to assist the student, family and school staff with transition planning and career preparation.

e. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations (General)

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

All DVR Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations are established within the parameters of Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement and submitted to the State's bidding portal at <http://mymarketplace.delaware.gov/>. The State of Delaware Procurement Portal is an all-inclusive site providing information on how to do procurement business with the state.

The Contracting unit within Government Support Services manages all statewide contracts for goods and services and administers agency contracts, as requested. This team is the State of Delaware's central contracting unit that acts on behalf of State agencies, local government units, authorized volunteer fire companies, and School Districts.

In Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19- October 1, 2018- September 30, 2019), DVR awarded Purchase of Services Agreements to 15 Nonprofit Organizations to provide Career Path Employment Services, providing opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities to increase the likelihood of successful integrated employment and successfully retain employment for 90 days. This process was established through a Request for Proposal competitive bidding process, in which applicants were scored and ranked based on pre-determined scoring criteria.

In the first quarter of FY19 Contract Amendments were sent to 7 Non-Profit organizations who were previously awarded Purchase of Service Agreement contracts providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to eligible youth enrolled in school ages 14-21 with a disability and potentially eligible for DVR services leading to employment for qualified individuals.

The Professional Services Agreement (Purchase of Service) was added to specify the updated terms and conditions of the Contract, and requirements of Del C. 29 § 6981.

The Scope of Work (Appendix A) was added to enhance and clarify DVR's expectation of the Non-Profit Organization regarding the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services, including the five service component areas.

The Scope of Work Contractor Response (Appendix B) was added to capture Contractor's delivery of services and program description.

The Budget Summary (Appendix C) was added to capture summer/year-round session, number of students, unit cost, total cost for each student served and total contract award amount.

Contract attachments were added to update The Monthly Progress Report, Referral Form and Invoicing requirements.

At the close of FY19 DVR reported the following metrics to RSA.

252 Total Referrals were distributed to 7 Non-Profit organizations providing Pre-ETS services: \$467,988 was spent on Career Services and \$294,093 was spent on training services. As a result of the Contract Amendments, DVR captured accurate and timely reporting metrics that increased the service delivery to DVR Pre-ETS clients. It is anticipated in the spring of FY20 DVR will issue a Request for Proposal for the Pre-Employment Transitional program (Pre-ETS) utilizing past performance data to determine funding allocations.

In the third quarter of FY19, DVR issued a Request for proposal for Employment Readiness Services. These services are intended for consumers where it has been established and documented by the VR counselor, consumer and vendor that job placement and coaching services are insufficient in meeting the consumer's needs adequately, and that the individual requires additional employment preparation experiences to build their resume and develop soft skills prior to entering job development, placement, and retention services. The RFP was issued in accordance with Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement. As a result of this solicitation DVR awarded 3 Non-Profit organizations Purchase of Services Agreement Contracts to provide Employment Readiness Services.

In the fourth quarter of FY19 DVR issued a Request for Proposal for Supported Employment Services (SE) for individuals with the most significant disabilities, both physical and cognitive. Individualized services are to be provided to enable the individual to achieve meaningful employment consistent with the consumer's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest, and informed choice. An RFP had not been issued in over 5 fiscal years, whereas, DVR was tasked with implementing the new Supported Employment model in conjunction with Federal Regulations on Supported Employment sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and Rehabilitation Services Administration. The RFP was issued in accordance with Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement. As a result of this solicitation DVR awarded 14 Non-Profit organizations Purchase of Services Agreement Contracts to provide Supported Employment Services.

DVR reeducated the SE vendor community with the payment for services established through a new milestone payment system. In previous fiscal years' the milestone payments were weighted more on the front end by way of assessments and job placement plans. Within the new Purchase of Services agreement for Supported Employment the milestone payments were restructured to focus more on Job Coaching to teach the essential skills needed to learn and maintain employment, provide the necessary prompts and possible behavioral changes and build natural supports to ensure continued success at work.

The Project SEARCH RFP awarded in late 2014 is in the fifth year of a five- year Contract cycle. Project SEARCH has expanded from one (1) site to four (4) sites statewide in FY18 with a capacity to serve 48 students. Current FY19 student roster has 41 active participants in its workplace readiness and work- based learning experience (unpaid internships). This contracted service will be extended in FY20, in which an RFP will be considered for publishing to award new contracts in FY20. The companion service of Start on Success (SOS) Program, a similar model to SEARCH, is successful in the State of Maryland. The program combines classroom training in job readiness and soft-skills, with skill training at an employer site, using onsite supports. Upon publishing the Pre-ETS RFP, the provider, Humanim, was compelled to bid to continue doing business with the

state. It had previously operated under a pilot and awarded a contract outside the scope of the 2013 RFP for placement services. The program operates in 4 school districts in New Castle County as of FY19.

Under the Ticket-To-Work Initiative and MOU with The Social Security Administration, DVR has contacted all Employment Networks (EN) that have agreed to serve Delaware. Currently, eight community rehabilitation facilities contracted through DVR are registered as ENs. The Delaware Department of Labor's Division of Employment and Training became registered as an EN in 2011 and began receiving Ticket to Work referrals. There have been no changes in this contracted service from FY16 to present. After providing a training program to agency and EN staff that included training by SSA and Mathematica, DVR is increasing its use of the Partnership Plus program.

As of FY20 there are roughly 50 active cooperative agreements which DVR has established through the RFP process and contract extensions per Delaware Code Chapter 69 State Procurement to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible and potentially eligible DVR clients.

DVR continues to maintain effective working relationships with their contracted service providers through quarterly meetings that include training opportunities in addition to discussing work operations and policy changes. In FY19, quarterly meetings were held and the DVR Contracts Administrator organized, set agenda, arranged training and moderated the meetings. DVR continues to collaborate with the Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (DeARF) now renamed Ability Network of Delaware. These members are part of the body of DVR Contractors participating in quarterly provider meetings. DVR is committed to provider engagement, collaboration, program development, standardization of reporting and quality improvement through the Contractor Provider Quarterly Meeting and one on one with a contracted provider.

f. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services (General)

Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

In order to provide supported employment services throughout Delaware, DVR has a cooperative agreement with the agency that serves individuals with intellectual/cognitive disabilities, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). The agreement is monitored by workgroups that review the program, identifying best practices and areas that need improvement. As delineated in the cooperative agreement, DVR and DDDS collaborate to provide supported employment services to transition-age students and youth and to adults with cognitive disabilities. The Early Start to Supported Employment Model provides Supported Employment Services to students with cognitive disabilities transitioning from school to work. The Department of Education, the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation have a cooperative agreement to reflect collaborative practices that promote early intervention and preparation for employment.

For individuals with cognitive disabilities, DVR and DDDS have a long-standing agreement on the Supported Employment (SE) process and financial responsibilities of each agency. For out of school youth and adults being referred to SE, typically the referral is made to DDDS and then sent to DVR with supporting documentation. DVR will assist the individual with selecting a SE provider and provide funding to that provider for 1.) supported employment career profile and community-based assessments, 2.) development of a job placement plan, 3.) job placement, 4.) job coaching/training, and 5.) stabilization/closure. DVR pays the final milestone of stabilization/closure once the individual has stabilized and is ready to transition to long term support. DVR continues to monitor the case for an additional 90 days, however once DVR payment ends at stabilization, funding shifts to DDDS for extended services, when available. DVR, DDDS and the providers work together to ensure individuals with disabilities receive quality and seamless SE services. The WIOA provision allowing VR to provide extended services has not impacted this process for those who qualify for DDDS.

In regard to students who are still in school, the only variation to the process is the responsibility of the schools to identify and inform students and families of the SE opportunity and assist with helping families to connect to the related services, i.e. DDDS. Once the school refers the student to DDDS for Supported Employment (2 years prior to high school exit), the process is the same. This model, Early Start to Supported Employment (ESSE), increases the collaboration with adult service providers and schools, facilitates better communication and sharing of information and increases employment opportunities for students near the time they exit from high school. SE providers are able to include information from the schools and observations of the students in the SE career profile and assessment process and begin job development while the student is still in school. The providers also share information with the schools to help them better understand how they can support students with more targeted skill development and employment preparation related to the student's employment goals and the needs of the businesses. Funding for ESSE remains the same as for general SE services as outlined above.

Although DVR and DDDS have had a long-standing partnership and agreement for providing Supported Employment services, there are still individuals with disabilities who do not qualify for DDDS yet need this level of service in order to achieve and maintain employment. DVR assists individuals to identify other potential sources of funding for extended services (Mental Health, Aging

and Adults with Physical Disabilities, PASS plans, etc.) as well as work with the SE provider agencies to develop natural supports on the job in order to provide the long-term supports an individual may require. The WIOA provision allowing VR agencies to provide extended services is an additional resource which assists our agency to more adequately support individuals who require SE services who do not have access to any other formal funding stream. This funding allows DVR to support SE providers longer for those individuals who require more intense coaching supports or for whom developing natural supports may take longer.

DVR is no longer providing traditional supported employment services for individuals served by the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) using supported employment funding. Rather, consumers who participate with Assertive Community Treatment/Intensive Case Management (ACT/ICM) Teams have access to all placement provider supports in addition to other planned supports. DVR and DSAMH currently employs a MOU that supports ACT/ICM consumers' access to all DVR placement supports. DVR and DSAMH are currently revising this MOU to facilitate serving mutually shared consumers, namely all consumers who receive Promise Medicaid waiver support. In addition to DVR serving all ACT/ICM consumers, this MOU will expand the partnership to all consumers receiving community mental health support. In an effort to promote inclusion and informed choice, all Promise consumers will have access to all of DVR's in-house and vendor placement providers. At 60 days of employment, Promise providers are engaged so that at 90 days of employment and closure with DVR, consumers will receive Promise-funded employment sustaining support.

g. Coordination with Employers (General)

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(5)). Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

1. VR services; and (General)

Co-located within the Delaware Department of Labor, the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has enriched connections to workforce information, resources, and other advantages for serving individuals with disabilities. Career exploration, employer engagement, and assisting our job seeker population to go to work are at the forefront of DVR's strategic goals. Consequently, working with employers and employer engagement is not a new role for DVR staff but has become an enhanced focus. Since September of 2007, the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has operated with an in-house Business Relations Unit to help guide business practices. The unit consists of one Statewide Business Relations Manager, five full-time and 2 part-time Business Relations Specialists, all of whom have post-secondary degrees with concentrations in areas such as marketing, communications, or human resource management. Unit team members consistently receive training in job development and placement, labor market and career information, marketing to business customers, employment readiness, soft skills training, the Americans with Disabilities Act and other areas required to bring proficiency to the job. The Business Relations Unit uses information from the Delaware Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information such as the Delaware Career Compass, the Delaware Monthly Labor Review and other labor market information as a guide for creating career opportunities for people with disabilities who want to go to work and for establishing linkages with business. Utilization of Delaware Job Links, the States free job matching and workforce information service for job seekers and business from the Division of Employment and Training, is also a resource used by the unit for serving its dual customer population. The Business Relations unit currently functions from a dual customer perspective and exists to:

- Assist the counselors in obtaining meaningful employment opportunities for all assigned job seekers who want to gain successful employment
- Identify and prepare the DVR job seekers in a timely manner in response to employer recruiting needs.
- Build solid relationships and engage business and industry in collaborative activities as a resource to meet their workforce needs.
- Increase state agency knowledge and participation in the State of Delaware's Selective Placement and Agency Aide programs to help advance hiring opportunities for people with disabilities seeking employment in State government.
- Work closely with local workforce development agencies, schools and community-based organizations who seek to build relationships with employers by engaging in career fairs, parent nights and other activities.
- Facilitate statewide communication, training, marketing, resource sharing and other activities related to consumer placement and business development.
- Work closely with state and local Chambers, SHRM, rotaries, and other professional organizations to promote a structure for networking and sharing information.

The DVR Business Relations Unit works with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program to assist businesses with Federal contracts to fulfill the Section 503 requirements regarding employment of individuals with disabilities. The OFCCCP has referred businesses that are seeking compliance to DVR for assistance. Federal contractors send lists of open positions to the Business Relations Unit. In addition, Business Relations Specialists work with the State's office of Government Support Services where state federal contracts are awarded.

Moving forward, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will continue to develop and enhance established partnerships with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of VR services. Utilizing the current practices in place, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will also:

- Engage employers in activities as strategic partners and not use them only in an advisory capacity.
- Use employers to help identify high demand industries and occupations in Delaware
- Utilize their expertise to develop career options and credentialed programs for individuals with disabilities who want to work.
- Promote and encourage their expertise in activities such as apprenticeships, OJT, internships, and other work-based learning opportunities where employer input is valued.
- Pursue careers, not just jobs, with individuals with disabilities who are interested in seeking employment.
- Use Delaware labor market trend information to assist with developing career options.
- Use the Talent Acquisition Portal to highlight Delaware's workforce talent and connect job seekers with a larger network of employers from across the country.
- Make use of available tools and resources that address workforce needs and job seeker skill sets.
 - O'NET
 - Talent Acquisition Portal
 - Division of Employment and Training, Delaware Job-Link
 - Delaware Office of Occupation and Labor Market Information (OOLMI)
- Collaborate with business, community service providers, colleges, universities, and other organizations for skill development training.
- Work with employers to identify skills gaps and collaborate with local training programs to customize training to meet the needs.
- Seek business guidance for developing curriculum for training programs.
- Encourage employer feedback regarding program services through activities such as open forums, surveys, and attendance at meetings in the business community.

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) will utilize their in-house Business Relations Unit staff, resources from Business Relations staff within the Department of Labor's Job Career Centers, and contractual job development and placement staff from the rehabilitation provider community to develop, build and maintain partnerships with business and industry. These statewide joint efforts will serve to create coordinated business outreach and services to connect business and industry to information and resources to meet their workforce needs and demands and create widespread employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Delaware. DVR will collaborate with business partners for specific events and activities which help to market career opportunities for people with disabilities. These business activities may include targeted job fair events with business that focus on demands of precise markets and help meet the needs of specific industries, career/job fair opportunities with business as a way for employers recruiters, and schools to connect with potential candidates and give pertinent information to potential employees/recruits, sponsored business disability mentoring days as a way of raising awareness of employment opportunities for people with disabilities and the talents they bring to the workplace, and disability awareness training and lunch-time learning offered to business partners as who are interested in creating a diverse workforce to learn on topics such as specific aspects of disabilities, assistive technology, workplace accommodations, tax credits and workforce incentives.

DVR will encourage business participation in the National Employment Team (NET) to develop a strategy across the footprint of a company. In addition, to offering business the advantage of national qualified applicants, DVR will facilitate business demonstrations of and access to the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), an online system that includes both a national talent pool of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) candidates looking for employment and a job posting system for businesses looking to hire individuals with disabilities.

The DVR in-house Business Relations Unit will utilize labor market information and work with businesses to identify those jobs considered in-demand and high growth sectors. The information will be provided to DVR counselors for developing career pathways in addition to creating training and work opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In partnership with business, DVR will gather real-time labor market information based on current conditions, industry and skills segments to identify workforce needs and supports and align credentialed training with community programs to meet those needs and demands. DVR will work cooperatively with business and industry and education to determine business recognized training opportunities that meet workforce demands and creates employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the community. In collaboration with WIOA partners who serve the business community, an employer survey is being developed to determine what business and industry need in terms of resources, information and services, and then follow-up with survey tool(s) for the level of customer satisfaction derived from the workforce services received. The survey will serve to gauge areas of best practices, met and unmet business needs, and areas of improvement for providing future workforce supports. DVR will collaborate and engage in training opportunities with WIOA core partners for how to better serve the business community based on their needs.

2. transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities. (General)

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) will utilize their in-house Business Relations Unit staff, resources from Business Relations staff within the Department of Labor's Job Career Centers, and contractual job development and placement staff from the rehabilitation provider community to develop, build and maintain partnerships with business and industry. These statewide joint efforts will serve to create coordinated business outreach and services to connect business and industry to information and resources to meet their workforce needs and demands and create widespread employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including students and youth, in Delaware. DVR will collaborate with business partners for specific events and activities which help to market career opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. These business activities may include targeted job fair events with business that focus on demands of precise markets and help meet the needs of specific industries. DVR holds an annual statewide Transition Conference for students, which is a collaborative effort between the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Department of Education (DOE), Division for Visually Impaired (DVI), and the Division of Development Disabilities Services (DDDS) along with a variety of other agencies and organizations. The event is instrumental with assisting students hear directly from employers and identifying potential career pathways. DVR's in-house Business Relations Unit staff collaborate with local employers to create diverse workshop panels as well as coordinating seminars on workplace readiness and soft skills. Career/job fair opportunities are developed with business as a way for employer's recruiters and schools to connect with potential candidates and give pertinent information to potential employees/recruits. DVR works with businesses and schools statewide to coordinate and sponsor disability mentoring days as a way of raising awareness of employment opportunities for students and youth with disabilities and the talents they bring to the workplace. Disability awareness training and lunch-time learning is also offered to business partners who are interested in creating a diverse workforce to learn on topics such as specific aspects of disabilities, assistive technology, workplace accommodations, tax credits and workforce incentives, etc.

DVR will encourage business participation in the National Employment Team (NET) to develop a strategy across the footprint of a company. In addition, to offer business the advantage of national qualified applicants, DVR will facilitate business demonstrations of and access to the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), an online system that includes both a national talent pool of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) candidates looking for employment and a job posting system for businesses looking to hire individuals with disabilities. Similarly, DVR has worked with employers across the

state to develop four Project SEARCH sites, increasing opportunities for students and youth with disabilities to participate in internships within those businesses and allowing businesses to be part of training the local workforce and preparing them for employment in high demand jobs in their local communities.

The DVR in-house Business Relations Unit will utilize labor market information and work with businesses to identify those jobs considered in-demand and high growth sectors. This information will be provided to DVR counselors for developing career pathways in addition to creating training and work opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. In partnership with business, DVR will gather real-time labor market information based on current conditions, industry and skills segments to identify workforce needs and supports and align credentialed training with community programs to meet those needs and demands. DVR will work cooperatively with business and industry and education to determine business recognized training opportunities that meet workforce demands and creates employment opportunities for students and youth with disabilities in the community. In collaboration with workforce partners who serve the business community, DVR will create a standard needs assessment to initially determine what business and industry need in terms of resources, information and services, and then follow-up with survey tool(s) for the level of customer satisfaction derived from the workforce services received. The survey will serve to gauge areas of best practices, met and unmet business needs, and areas of improvement for providing future workforce supports. DVR will collaborate and engage in training opportunities with WIOA core partners for how to better serve the business community based on their needs.

DVR has contracts with 16 community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) for the purpose of assisting DVR consumers with job placement. As is the case with the in-house Business Relations Unit, the CRPs work with both students, youth, and adults who are seeking employment. DVR counselors work with the CRP staff to ensure that the consumer's employment outcome is commensurate with their vocational goals and preparation.

h. Interagency Cooperation (General)

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

1. the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act; (General)

The State of Delaware, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Social Services was awarded a federal grant through SNAP, USDA (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to address the barriers to employment in a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of consumers with wrap around services. DVR was invited to partner to strategically address the needs of participants as it relates to eliminating or reducing the impact of a criminal history on securing employment through the expansion of the Advancement through Pardon and Expungement (APEX) program services. The criminal background barriers to employment to be addressed via the APEX program include supporting consumers towards either expungement or pardoning of charges. The APEX program was signed into agreement in 2012 and serves all Delawareans in the pursuit of expungement and/or pardon as a barrier reduction. Criminal backgrounds continue to be a legitimate barrier to employment for anyone seeking employment, and disproportionately so for people with disabilities. In a 50/50 partnership with the Division of Social Services (DSS), DVR manages three employees who serve DSS and DVR consumers statewide. In 2016 a MOU has been crafted and signed between DSS and DVR to support administrative filing consumer costs up to \$250 per.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) and DVR have a seamless continuum of service delivery of SE client from DVR to DDDS for follow-up and DVR requires SE providers be approved DDDS providers and in compliance with annual training requirement per DDDS via Medicaid. SE clients have access to barrier reduction services e.g. APEX and assistive technology, e.g. Empowerability –contracted service provider in addition to Independent Living and Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities resources where applicable.

DVR began providing Pre-Employment Transition Services with summer programs in 2015. Since that time, the program has expanded to work-based programs in every county, including programs during the school year. This is in collaboration with Department of Education, the Division of Services for Children, Youth, and Families and community based partners through RFP awards. Project Search, implemented on or about 2012 as a pilot, has expanded to the all three counties.

2. the State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and (General)

DVR continues to work with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDDS) to maintain good inter-agency relationships. DVR, DDDS and DSAMH have Memorandums of Understanding to address program integration, shared staff and employer training, customized employment, the overall shared serving of our mutual consumers and post-employment follow along services. The collaborative efforts with DDDS and DSAMH have enhanced integrated competitive employment and wrap around support services for persons with significant mental illness and cognitive disabilities statewide.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) and DVR have a seamless continuum of service delivery for supported employment clients from DVR to DDDS for follow-up and extended services and supports. DVR requires supported employment providers be approved DDDS providers

and in compliance with annual training requirement per DDDS via Medicaid. On a semi-annual basis, staff training is provided through a Supported Customized Employment Bootcamp program that trains DVR supported employment staff, along with representatives from DDDS, DSAMH, the Department of Education, LEAs including individuals from the school districts, charter schools and community rehabilitation providers. This program is jointly funded by DVR, DDDS and DOE and offers training on effective supported employment and business engagement processes. This training facilitates skill building, networking and cross-agency understanding and collaboration to better serve our mutual consumers and local businesses.

The cooperative agreement specifies which agency is responsible throughout the supported employment process with DVR responsible through employment stabilization. DVR provides funding to the SE provider for 1.) discovery and community-based work assessments, 2.) job placement, 3.) stabilization/closure. DVR pays the 3rd and final milestone once the individual has achieved 90 days of employment and continues to monitor the individual for an additional 60 days (150 total). Once DVR pays the final milestone at 90 days of employment, DDDS, through a community provider, assumes responsibility for the long-term follow-along extended services.

The Early Start to Supported Employment Model provides Supported Employment Services to students with developmental disabilities transitioning from school to work. The model has been refined since its inception in 2005, adding Customized Employment principles and working with providers to begin services earlier, in the year prior to the student's exiting year. The Department of Education, the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation have updated their cooperative agreements to reflect newly implemented effective practices

The Project SEARCH model was first implemented in Delaware several years ago through collaboration with Red Clay School District, the Delaware Department of Education, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Christiana Care Health Services. The project provides employment services to people students, many of whom are eligible for long term support services through the Division for Developmental Disability Services. DDDS provides long term supports to eligible consumers who received job training and placement through project SEARCH. Project Search currently has a site in all 3 counties in Delaware.

3. the State agency responsible for providing mental health services. (General)

DVR is currently meeting semi-annually with all Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team community partners, specifically front line workers and supervisors, DSAMH ACT management and DVR front line workers to share best competitive integrated employment practices and to apply consistency across providers and agencies. All new community partner employment specialists experience customized employment training via DVR. Quarterly meetings are held with community partners to review contractual employment responsibilities. Contracts with community partners have been modified to require all job ready consumers be registered with DOL one-stop Employment and Training JobLink web-based career pathways-focused case management system. Progress reports are required monthly. DVR and community partners also work closely with the Business Leadership Network, the Workforce Development Board and with DOL Employment and Training to maximize competitive, integrated employment opportunities for participants of the ACT team programs.

i. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development (General)

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10)). Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development (General)

A. Qualified Personnel Needs. (General)

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

- i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category; (General)

The Delaware DVR serves clients out of 4 offices and 1 satellite office across the 3 counties.

Per DVR AWARE case management system, the end of year statistics for activity initiated in FY18 are as follows: 2,287 consumers applied for services, 2,028 were determined eligible for services, 1,395 began receiving services, 880 successfully worked for >90 days and were closed and 1,137 consumers left DVR and were not successfully employed (166 from application, 258 from eligibility, 698 from service and 15 from employment). As of 9/30/2018, 319 consumers were in application status, 1 in a trial work experience, 555 in delayed status, 259 were eligible for services, 2,174 were receiving services and/or looking for employment, 419 were solely looking for employment, 374 were employed and 66 were receiving post-employment services.

Per DVR AWARE case management system, the end of year statistics for activity initiated in FY19 are as follows: 1,843 applied for services, 1,849 were determined eligible for services, 1,246 began receiving services, 900 successfully worked for >90 days and were closed and 1,236 were not successfully employed (148 from application, 368 from eligibility, 711 from service and 9 from employment). As of 9/30/2019, 166 consumers were in application status, 555 in delayed status, 494 were determined eligible for services, 1,726 were receiving services and/or looking for employment, 539 were solely looking for employment, 328 were employed and 55 were receiving post-employment services.

New Caseload Items	FY 2018	FY 2019
Applications	2,287	1,843
Individuals entering into service, eligible/OOS	2,028	1,849
TOTAL # of	1,395	1,246

individuals receiving services at closure of FY		
Closed successfully	880	900
TOTAL # engaged in the VR process	6,185	6,035

Currently, January 2020, the Division is staffed by the following personnel categories:

Administrative Specialists (inclusive of job titles; Administrative Specialist, Social Services Technician and Temps performing duties as) – Total of 26 positions are dedicated to performing administrative duties to support the VR agency. 24 of them are full time positions and 2 are part-time positions. Of these 26, 14 are dedicated to pre-employment and transition services and the remaining 12 perform administrative duties to support the counselors with general caseloads, the District Administrators and the remainder of the leadership team.

Fiscal Staff – 4 full time filled positions, with 0 additional staff member working part-time

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors- The DE DVR has 31 full time VRC positions, with 28 of the positions filled and operational, and 1 part-time Counselor. Often counselors are not dedicated to a specific case type and may work both a general caseload and with individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.

- 9 Counselors are dedicated to serving applicants for VR services that are of transition age seeking VR services. DVR has two full-time vacancies, one each in the Wilmington and Georgetown offices.

- 10 Counselors are dedicated to working with Community Rehabilitation Providers serving individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and/or substance abuse diagnosis.

- 7 Counselors are dedicated to serving individuals going through Supported Employment, our Early Start to Supported Employment program that collaborates with the DD agency, and each school to engage students identified as benefiting from supported employment services, and more recently serving the individuals exiting sub-minimum wage employment.

- 9 Counselors are dedicated to general referrals. DVR has 1 vacancy in Newark.

- 1 Counselor is serving individuals who are deaf.

- 1 part-time Counselor is serving students at the local community college.

Vocational Rehabilitation District Administrators- 4

Business Services Representatives- 5

Sr. Social Services Administrator- 3

Social Services Administrator- 2

Management Analyst- 1

Deputy Director- 1

Division Director- 1

Over the course of FY 2018 and FY 2019 the division experienced turnover in 2 Senior Social Service Administrators, 3 out of 4 District Administrators, 2 Social Service Administrators, 13 VR Counselor positions. This impacted service delivery and outreach significantly as many were senior seasoned counselors and leadership staff and several were serving the transition program where services are initiated by DVR outreach vs individuals knowingly seeking VR services.

For the delivery of Pre-Employment Transition Services, the DE DVR hired 4 part-time staff to work with schools to deliver the 5 required services, with the assistance of 1 Administrative Specialist.

DE DVR hired 4 Pre-ETS counselors to replace the 4 hired in FY16 and FY17. DE DVR also hired 2 Social Service Administrators to coordinate training for the VR staff. These 2 staff serve to coordinate Pre-ETS and transition services.

The DE DVR no longer employs a Social Services Administrator to coordinating training for the Vocational Rehabilitation Staff. Training needs are met by the 4 District Administrators, pairing newer counselors with senior counselors and utilizing the VR Development Group for on-line training.

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and (General)

Administrative Specialists (inclusive of job titles; Administrative Specialist, Social Services Technician and Temps performing duties as)- 24 FTE, 2 PTE

Fiscal Staff – 4 FTE,

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors- 31 FTE, 1 PTE

Vocational Rehabilitation District Administrators- 4

Business Services Representatives- 5

Sr. Social Services Administrator- 3 (Manager of the Business Relations Unit, Contract Administrator, and Statewide Transition Services Coordinator)

Social Services Administrator- 2 (Upstate and downstate transition coordinators)

Management Analyst- 1

Deputy Director- 1
Division Director- 1

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors. (General)

Job Title Projected 5-year Vacancies

Administrative Specialists- 7 of the FTE.

Fiscal Staff- 3

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors- 11

Vocational Rehabilitation District Administrators- 2

Business Services Representatives- 2

Sr. Social Services Administrator- 2

Management Analyst- 1

Division Director- 1

B. Personnel Development (General)

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program; (General)

Delaware does not have an institute of higher education with a vocational rehabilitation program, however we maintain communication and close working relationships with our institutions in the Mid-Atlantic Region that do offer the master's program. DE DVR also shares out information when the online programs are recruiting.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and (General)

University of Kentucky Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling

Virginia Commonwealth University Master of Science in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling

Delaware State University, Associates in Applied Science and in a BS program for Social Work (in progress)

Wilmington University master's in administration of Human Services

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure. (General)

3

n2. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel (General)

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

The Deputy Director represents the agency on the Advisory Committees at George Washington University and Rutgers University. The District Administrators maintain a relationship with the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, Wilmington University and Delaware Technical & Community College and regularly provide internships for students pursuing degrees in Human Services. Upon notice, job openings are sent through contacts at the universities. Delaware DVR regularly invites graduate students in these programs to complete their practicum and internship experiences with Delaware DVR, particularly where there is a projected void in staffing.

The State of Delaware has a Selective Placement Program in which agencies can interview qualified individuals with disabilities without having to post a position. This program was developed to recruit more individuals with disabilities. The Division has provided training about Selective Placement statewide to all Counselors and Employment Specialists, as well as community partners who have contracts to do job development and job placement services.

Once hired, VRC's receive an On Boarding Plan that introduces the agency, provides a prescribed training plan that will be scheduled out over their first few months, aids in navigating their resources, and offers a checklist of various activities they will participate in by way of introduction to the Delaware DVR.

3. Personnel Standards (General)

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and (General)

It is a standard practice that a Master's level candidate be hired in Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions. To fill specialized positions with special linguistic requirements or positions in rural locations or in the complete absence of candidates who meet the established personnel standards, DVR recognizes that it may be necessary to hire individuals who will not meet the State requirements. In order to minimize the number of individual's not meeting State requirements; DVR has marketed employment opportunities to universities with Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling programs by posting positions through their networks and conducting presentations to graduate seminars to recruit graduate interns.

Currently, 25 of the 31 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors have Master's Degrees in Rehabilitation or a related field. While it is not a requirement by the State to possess or be eligible to sit for the CRC, DE DVR does hold the Commission in high regards as the only certifying body directly related to field of helping people with disabilities achieves employment. District Administrators encourage staff to pursue the additional coursework to gain a Master's degree and/or a CRC. All of our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are required to attend at least 20 hours of training annually directly related to serving people and businesses in regard to supporting people with disabilities.

Every permanent position within DVR has an established job description which outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the position. DVR uses competency-based interviewing, a process for determining whether the job candidate has the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities in the job description, to fill open positions.

B. the establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities. (General)

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has set the following as its personnel standard for rehabilitation counselor:

1. Possession of a Master's degree or higher in Rehabilitation Counseling, Social or Behavioral Science or related field OR Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation.
2. At least one year experience in vocational rehabilitation.
3. Six months experience in health or human services work which includes applying theories, principles, laws and practices of health or human services programs and services that assist with and improve life for individuals, families, or communities such as financial support, employment including a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs

of individuals with disabilities, unemployment, housing, health care, disease prevention, substance abuse, child protective services, physical/mental health treatment and prevention or rehabilitation.

4. Six months experience in analyzing and interpreting medical, psychiatric, psychological, psycho-social, educational and vocational reports from medical, psychological, and other experts to determine eligibility or an individual's vocational rehabilitation needs.

5. Six months experience in case management which includes assessing, planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating options and services to meet an individual's human service needs.

6. Six months experience in interpreting vocational rehabilitation laws, rules, regulations, standards, policies and procedures

The DE DVR hosted or participated in the following trainings to ensure staff have 21st century understanding of the evolving workforce and to encourage cross-sector collaboration with other one stop partners since October 2018.

-Training has been offered in our case management system, AWARE, as it relates to the updates reflecting new reporting schedule and data elements.

-The DE DOL hosts an Annual One Stop Partners Convening, giving all partners the opportunity to network, receive information on the other programs and build plans for service integration. All staff is highly encouraged to attend.

-DVR hosted a day long training with SSA on the Partnership Plus Employment Network Ticket to Work program. Counselors are referring appropriate individuals to 1 of 2 statewide community partner Employment Networks at 60 days of successful employment.

-The DE DVR hosts, in collaboration with DOE and DDDS, an annual Transition Conference that all transition staff are highly encouraged to attend.

-The DE Pathways to Prosperity Network hosts a conference annually to bring employers, secondary and post-secondary education together to demonstrate where education is working to meet the needs of the labor market and discuss opportunities to strengthen the supports for students. All staff is encouraged to attend.

-DVR hosts annual full team trainings mandatory for all staff to attend

4. Staff Development. (General)

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. System of staff development (General)

a. system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

In the spring of 2019, DVR coordinated a training on using Assistive Technology with individuals who have vision loss. The training focused both on assisting staff and consumers to be successful in the workplace.

The performance of all DVR staff is formally evaluated annually. Specific performance expectations relative to the mission of the Division and the duties of the position are listed on each staff member's performance plan. The performance plans of all Rehabilitation Counselors and Business Relations Specialists include the goal of completing a minimum of 20 hours of In-Service Training. The 20 hours of In-Service Training requirement is consistent with the requirement of the Commission of Rehabilitation Counseling Committee for those with the CRC designation. During the Performance Review process, the staff member is evaluated based on his or her ability to meet the outlined expectations. When training is recommended to improve performance, it is noted on the performance plan and incorporated into the individual's training needs assessment.

B. Acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge (General)

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

A sub-committee of the WIOA Leadership Team is working on developing Adult Career Pathways. The sub-committee is charged with assessing how effectively adults seeking employment in Delaware are accessing Career Pathways and correlating labor market information in each county with available business-recognized, credential-bearing training. There is also mass email distribution to staff, when publications and webinars are available and applicable to their work, through our national resource centers such as the WINTAC, Mathematica, Institute for Community Inclusion, and Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

5. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs (General)

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in

the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

Within the Division, a Counselor position has been designated as Rehabilitation Counselors for clients who are deaf or hard of hearing. The incumbent is deaf and fluent in American Sign Language, making DVR services accessible to consumers who use manual communication.

Within New Castle County, one position is designated for a bilingual, English and Spanish, Counselor in order to serve the Hispanic population. We currently have two Counselors in the state who speak both English and Spanish fluently. The division hires interpreters to work with clients when there is no available Counselor to serve the client at hand based on language barriers.

6. Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (General)

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The DVR and the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) work closely to provide Transition services to high school students with disabilities. DVR has an assigned Counselor to all public, and many private, charter and alternative school in the state. Counselors maintain regular business hours within their assigned schools. Where there is not a Counselor assigned, the office District Administrators handle referrals from the schools on a case by case basis. The DVR Senior Social Services Administrator for Transition Services works closely with the DOE Educational Associate to coordinate transition programs throughout the state. DVR also employs 2 Social Service Administrators to help coordinate transition and Pre-ETS services up and downstate.

The DVR Senior Social Services Administrator for Transition Services program is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Transition Council and the State Transition Council. The Transition Coordinator represents DVR on the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens and the adult transition services sub-committee. DVR and DOE have partnered with various agencies and organizations and the Delaware Community of Practice on Transition to hold an annual statewide transition conference.

The Statewide Transition Cadre holds quarterly meetings where DOE Administrators, school district administrators, local education agency personnel, DVR Counselors and DVR Administrators come together to collaborate, share ideas and work on enhancing services, post-school planning and outcomes for transition-age youth.

j. Statewide Assessment (General)

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(a)).

1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those: (General)

A. with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services; (General)

A committee made up of several members of the SRC and the DVR Management Analyst developed the survey for the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) during FY 2017. A new CSNA will be completed in FY 2020 and reflected in the 2022 State Plan update.

As required by Federal regulations, the committee developed questions, both open and closed-ended, that address the five topics that are required for the assessment. The survey was created to be completed both using the Survey Monkey online system or via paper copy. The online survey was distributed through numerous disability listservs as well as through the DVR social media on Facebook and Twitter. The paper surveys were available primarily through the DVR field offices. Over four hundred individuals began the survey, while nearly 300 completed the entire survey. The respondents were from New Castle County (44%), Kent County (24%), Sussex County (27%) or from outside of the state while providing services in Delaware (5%). The plurality of respondents were service providers (42%) with individuals with disabilities (29%) and parents/guardians/advocates (29%) also represented.

Participants were provided with Likert scales that included neutral and don't know/no answer as possible responses. Although "don't know/no answer" was a possible response for all questions that included a Likert scale (e.g. Strongly Agree...Strongly Disagree), respondents were able to skip questions or topics on which they did not wish to respond.

Section 1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

Participants responded positively (67% agreement) to a statement indicating that DVR provides services to individuals with the most employment challenges but 54% also agreed that DVR could improve those services. When asked what services would be most needed, work readiness training, job coaching, job placement, on-the-job training, and work experiences were all identified by at least 40% of the participants.

When asked about the availability of supported employment services, 60% agreed that they were available to people with the most significant employment challenges. In response to an open-ended question about improvements, participants indicated timeliness/speed of services, longer assessments, follow-along for people with more types of disabilities, transportation, longer follow-along, more training for service providers, and better communication as potential areas.

B. who are minorities; (General)

While 65% of the participants agreed that individual who are minorities had access to DVR services, only 4% disagreed; however, when asked the open ended question about how DVR could improve services to people who are minorities, participants indicated that minorities should include Spanish

and other non-English speaking individuals, more outreach, resources in alternate languages and formats, greater hours of operation, more staff and staff training, and establish a review team for when major requests are denied.

C. who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program; (General)

In response to a question about which individuals have the hardest time obtaining services, participants indicated that some disability groups had more difficulty, people with language barriers or who couldn't advocate for themselves, people with criminal backgrounds, were homebound or homeless, lacking transportation, looking for advancement or self-employment, or were students without good support systems. To overcome those barriers, participants recommended greater and more varied outreach, increased staff which language abilities or who have disabilities, services on college campuses, order of selection changes (some indicating more restrictions while others indicating that people should not be lost on the waiting list), getting people who are homeless into the system more rapidly, better transportation, not overlooking adults in favor of students, and hiring a behavior analyst.

D. who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and (General)

Participants were asked about which often WIOA partner programs they had requested services and from which they had actually received services. In almost every case, except for one which had been requested by only 2% of the respondents, the number receiving services was less than the number requesting them.

When asked about which reason services had not been received, 43% indicated no barriers, 42% indicated problems with transportation, 24% were not aware of the programs, 14% indicated a language barrier, 12% indicated a disability-related barrier, 7% indicated that the program was not available locally, and 3% indicate lack of physical accessibility. Among the other barriers indicated was a comment about being referred back to DVR when trying to access a non-VR partner.

E. who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services. (General)

Although a description of Pre-ETS and Transition Services preceded the survey questions, several questions in Topic IV received a plurality of "don't know/no answer" responses.

When asked when asked about access to the pre-employment transitions services needed for employment, 43% agreed and 13% disagreed that students have access. Respondents indicated 22% agreement and 23% disagreement to a statement that DVR and schools coordinated Pre-ETS programs. When asked about services to prepare for employment for transition youth (14-24), 33% agreed that the youth have access while 18% disagreed.

To an open-ended question about additional services needed for transition age youth, the participants responses included training (e.g. specific vocational training, parent training, youth training about their disabilities), work experiences, services in lower and western Sussex County, more counselors, more outreach, and funding for specific services such as speech therapy and behavior supports. When asked how transition and Pre-ETS services could be improved, responses included outreach to parents, students, and counselors, more work experiences, more staff and staff support, greater availability of programs, more services in Kent and Sussex counties, better integration with IEPs, and placement services for summer employment.

2. Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and (General)

In response to a statement that CRP services meet the needs of people in Delaware, 34% agreed and 20 % disagreed. When asked about ways that services could be improved, 55% indicated location (including all counties), 54% indicated the types of training (e.g. specific vocational programs, for individuals with specific disabilities such as autism and traumatic brain injury), 35% indicated accessibility (e.g. need for paratransit, for individuals with specific disabilities such as mental health and traumatic brain injury), and 35% had other recommendations (e.g. more outreach, transportation, staff, better placement after training, incentives for higher quality job placements, and faster follow-up after referral).

3. Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. (General)

DVR requested feedback from the community via the CSNA, per above, and from the SRC via their agency assessment as noted in Section a of this plan.

In both of the aforementioned assessments, the need for coordination and communication were evident in the responses. Efforts to increase coordination and communication are ongoing.

- DVR has had liaison counselors in all of the public and private/parochial school programs in Delaware and served home-schooled students that are identified for 20 years. In addition to participating in IEP meetings for many of the students, the liaison counselors and DVR statewide transition staff participate in school and district level meetings to make presentation about transition to parents and school staff.
- The annual Transition Conference, sponsored by a Community of Practice that includes DVR, the Department of Education, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, occurs annually in the fall. The conference in 2017 had record-setting attendance and provided tracks for students and for parents/educators. The opening plenary featured students and recent graduates who emphasized the need for students to be educated about self-direction and involved in their educational and vocational planning. Current students also opened each of the workshops throughout the day and participated in many of the presentations.
- DVR has hired four Pre-ETS counselors to work directly with students in their final year of middle school as they transition to high school. The goal is to begin to offer Pre-ETS to students at age 14 so that they are aware and prepared as they enter high school.
- DVR participates in monthly Transition Cadre meetings where DVR and education participants share information about transition activities. DVR also participates in the Statewide Transition Council meetings.

Respondents to both the CSNA and SRC feedback survey both indicated the need to expand work experiences and training, particularly in the southern counties of the state, Kent and Sussex.

- DVR has expanded its Project SEARCH offerings. There are now four locations, including one in Kent County and one in Sussex County. The program has the capacity to serve 48

students. DVR is continuing to look at additional sites statewide to meet the needs of students.

- Start on Success continues to occur in New Castle County only but has expanded to work with students from four school districts. An attempt to initiate a program in Kent County encountered logistical barriers. The program may be initiated in an upcoming school year.
- The statewide Early Start to Supported Employment program, as in all supported employment programs, occurs in employment sites in the community. To the extent possible, Early Start brings students into the community to assess students or provide work experiences in integrated, competitive situations.
- Pre-ETS programming outside of the schools is available in all counties. Pre-ETS are provided in integrated settings, very often competitive employment settings, where participants get hands-on opportunities to expand their knowledge of and skills for future employment.

k. Annual Estimates (General)

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:

1. The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services; (General)

It is estimated that approximately 1,800 new applicants will be determined eligible in FY 2020.

2. The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under: (General)

A. The VR Program; (General)

Including people carrying over plans from prior years, DVR estimates that approximately 6,000 individuals will receive services through individualized plans for employment (IPEs) under Part A of Title I and/or Part B of Title VI in FY 2019. The estimated cost of providing services to these individuals is \$9,192,000. We also estimate that DVR will only have \$5,720,592 available in its regular FY 2020 Federal allotment to provide services for DVR clients.

B. The Supported Employment Program; and (General)

Out of the 6,000 individuals who will receive services, approximately 120 are expected to receive services under Title VI-B. All clients served under Title VI-B are considered to be in Category 1 – Most Significantly Disabled.

C. each priority category, if under an order of selection; (General)

- Category 1 – Most Significantly Disabled – Number of clients served: 2,580
- Category 2 – Significantly Disabled – Number of clients served: 1,154
- Category 3 – Not Significantly Disabled • Number of clients served: 20
- TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS ABLE TO BE SERVED: 3,754

3. The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and (General)

- Category 1 – Most Significantly Disabled – Number of clients placed on waiting list: zero
- Category 2 – Significantly Disabled – Number of clients placed on waiting list: 1,666
- Category 3 – Not Significantly Disabled • Number of clients placed on waiting list: 580
- TOTAL ELIGIBLE BUT NOT SERVED DUE TO ORDER OF SELECTION: 2,246

4. The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category. (General)

The cost for serving all eligible individuals in all categories would be.

Category 1 – Most Significantly Disabled

Cost of Services: \$ 3,952,560

Category 2 – Significantly Disabled

Cost of Services: \$ 4,320,240

Category 3 – Not Significantly Disabled

Cost of Services: \$ 919,200

TOTAL COST: \$ 9,192,000

Based on providing services under the current Order of Selection, the cost of services is estimated to be:

Category 1 – Most Significantly Disabled

Cost of Services: \$ 3,952,560

Priority Category Anticipated Cost 2 – Significantly Disabled

Cost of Services: \$ 1,737,392

Priority Category 3 -Not Significantly Disabled

Cost of Services: \$30,640

I. State Goals and Priorities (General)

The designated State unit must:

1. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed (General)

Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

Each year, the State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation review, define, and update DVR's goal and priorities. In keeping with the Delaware's WIOA Combined State Plan timeline, the review of goals and priorities occurred at the February 2019 meeting of the SRC. The Goals and Priorities below were jointly developed by the State Rehabilitation Council and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. At a previous meeting in 2018, the SRC and DVR had decided to maintain three of the goals from the previous plan; however, the criteria that determined the focus of the goals has changed as indicated below.

2. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs. (General)

GOAL 1. Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities.

Performance Objectives and Measures

- a. Builds Relationships with Business
 1. Continued participation with the NET/TAP, SHRM, and the Chamber of Commerce.
 2. Educate employers on the benefits of working with DVR
- b. Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment
 1. Educate parents and guardians on the benefits that working has to the well-being of the client.
- c. Services support Financial Independence
 1. Increase the overall average hourly wage by \$.10 each year over the previous year.
 2. Increase the adult average hourly wage by \$.10 each year over the previous year.
 3. Increase average hourly wage for transition students by \$.10 each year over the previous year.
 4. Increase average hourly wage for supported employment by \$.05 each year over the previous year.
- d. Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory
 1. Percentage of minority participation is equal or greater than the percentage in the general populations

GOAL 2. Support training programs that reflect high demand opportunities in the labor market.

Performance Objectives and Measures

- a. Helps Consumers to Focus on their Career Pathways
 1. DVR will continue with the Dept. of Education and other WIOA partners in the development of Career Pathways programs both for youth and adults.
 2. At least annually, provide information and training to DVR staff regarding accessing credential-bearing programs that lead to employment within identified Career Pathways.
- b. Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials

1. In conjunction with WIOA partners, including the Delaware Technical and Community College and the Department of Education, identify and/or develop training opportunities in each county that lead to credentials and employment in the top five fields of employment in each county.
- c. Coordination with WIOA Partners
 1. Participation in the monthly WIOA Leadership Team meeting
 2. Participation on work teams related to the WIOA Leadership Team goals that were created in conjunction with the Delaware Workforce Development Board plan.
 3. Participation in the WIOA Partners projects related to making good referrals and coordinating services between partners.

GOAL 3. Continue to provide pre–employment transition services and transition career services to transition–aged individuals with disabilities.

Performance Objectives and Measures

- a. Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services
 1. Focus on maximizing the number of students who receive Pre-ETS.
 2. Focus on accurate documentation of Pre-ETS services in the client information system
- b. Quality of Transition Services
 1. Communication is ongoing with education on the State and local levels
 2. Services for clients are identified in coordination with the schools including the use of Labor Market Information and Career Pathways
- c. Coordination with Partners (e.g. Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services)
 1. Continue Project SEARCH in the current 4 locations and look to expand the program.

3. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas: (General)

A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates; (General)

(A) WIOA expands the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, Section (j) Statewide Assessment, to include input related to transition services. In FY 2017, DVR, with support and guidance from the SRC, conducted a Comprehensive Statewide Needs assessment that included the new section on transition and Pre-ETS services. Feedback was incorporated into Section (j) as well as into the goals and priorities outlined above.

B. the State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and (General)

(B) Section 116 of WIOA, the common measures, was woven tightly into the goals and priorities above. The measures are included in the performance goals including business engagement, measurable skill gains and credentialing in identified Career Pathways, and focus on employment and wages.

C. other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and finding and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107. (General)

(C) The State Rehabilitation Council, jointly with representation from DVR, participated in an effectiveness evaluation in order to review the goals and priorities established by the previous State Plan and to establish the goals and priorities above. They were presented with performance data from the previous year and participated in discussion. Following the discussion DVR received written input from the SRC members. Their written input, identified in section a of the State Plan, was incorporated into the goals and priorities. Prior to submitting the goals and priorities outlined above, the draft goals and priorities were sent out to the SRC members for comments and recommendations.

m. Order of Selection (General)

Describe:

1. Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe: (General)

A. The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services. (General)

Due to limited resources, the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation believes that it will be unable to provide services to all individuals who are eligible under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended (the Act). According to section 101 (a)(5) of the Act, if a rehabilitation agency determines that it is unable to provide services for all eligible individuals, an Order of Selection is required in order to ensure that the agency has as its priority the provision of services to individuals with the most significant disabilities and that categories are established to define the priorities.

B. The justification for the order. (General)

Including people carrying over plans from prior years, DVR estimates that approximately 6,000 individuals will be eligible for services under Part A of Title I and/or Part B of Title VI in FY 2020. The estimated cost of providing services to these individuals is \$9,192,900. We also estimate that DVR will only have \$5,720,592 available in its regular FY 2020 Federal allotment to provide services for DVR clients so there will not be enough funds available to serve all eligible clients.

C. The service and outcome goals. (General)

Description of Priority categories Accordingly, DVR establishes the following categories for service provision:

Priority Category I, Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD) Eligible individuals with impairments that result in serious limitations of three or more functional capacities that require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time, six months or more.

Priority Category II, Individuals with Significant Disabilities (SD) Eligible individuals with impairments that result in serious limitations in one or two functional capacities requiring multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time, six months or more. An allowed SSDI beneficiary or SSI recipient is automatically considered to be, at least, an individual with a significant disability, and should be reviewed for possible Priority 1 status.

Priority Category III, Individuals with Non-Significant Disabilities Eligible individuals with a disability who do not meet the definition for MSD or SD.

D. The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order. (General)

In FY 2019, the average time that a person spent on the waiting list before being removed was 240 days.

The numbers below reflect DVR's anticipated ability to serve individuals in Fiscal Year 2020. Both Category 2 and Category 3 are currently closed. We anticipate being able to serve a portion of clients in category 2.

Priority Category 1 Anticipated Served: 2,580
Anticipated Cost: \$ 3,952,560

Priority Category 2 Anticipated Served: 1,154
Anticipated Cost: \$ 1,737,392

Priority Category 2 Anticipated Not Served: 1,666

Priority Category 3 Anticipated Served: 20
Anticipated Cost: \$ 30,640

Priority Category 3 Anticipated Not Served: 580

E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities; and (General)

In order to focus services on the individuals with the most significant disabilities, DVR will serve individuals in the following order:

First: Priority Category I

Second: Priority Category II

Third: Priority Category III

As DVR determines that the agency has sufficient resources to move individuals from the waiting list, individuals will be moved to active services first according to priority category and secondly according to date of application. Written notification is sent to all individuals who are placed on the waiting list for vocational rehabilitation services. The notification includes information about available services and resources the individual may contact for assistance in employment. Each letter identifies the nearest American Job Center, established per the Workforce Investment Act.

2. If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment. (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has updated its policy to state: An eligible individual who is employed at application and requires specific services or equipment to maintain employment may receive services regardless of their priority category.

n. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds. (General)

1. Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services. (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) funds supported employment services statewide for consumers under Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act and allocates all funds for services. Program Funds are used to purchase supported employment services from the community rehabilitation programs under a Purchase of Services Agreement with DVR. In order to provide supported employment for all consumers who require services, Title I funds are used to supplement the Title VI, Part B allocation. Supported employment is competitive employment or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working toward competitive work, with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred, or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has a long-standing partnership with the DE Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) regarding providing supported employment (SE) services. Individuals with intellectual disabilities who need long term supports in order to obtain and maintain employment are referred to DVR and DDDS. The individual works with a community rehabilitation provider (CRP) of their choice to complete a supported employment career profile and community-based assessment to identify a vocational goal and the necessary supports to be successful in employment. The CRP assists the individual with job placement and coaching for a total of 90 days or until the individual is stable on the job. At that time, DVR pays the CRP the final milestone payment after which DDDS provides funding to the CRP for the long term supports for the individual to remain on the job. DVR continues to monitor the case for an additional 90 days once the individual enters extended services through DDDS; however, no additional funding is provided by DVR. For individuals not eligible for DDDS services, but needing long term supports in order to be successful on a job, DVR assists the individual to identify other sources of long-term funding or natural supports on the job.

Although Delaware has a strong SE program in place with excellent partnerships with the Department of Education (DOE), DDDS, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and DVR, there are still many students who are potentially eligible for SE services who are not being referred. Each year the DOE identifies the number of students statewide who are enrolled in school and have a disability typically meeting the criteria for DDDS services and/or requiring SE services in order to obtain and maintain employment. There are a variety of factors which influence the referral process for students, including school staff not believing a student can work (low expectations, lack of understanding of adult services and supports available, etc.), families not supporting employment as a goal for their child (safety concerns, fear of losing benefits, lack of understanding of adult services and Supported Employment, low expectations etc.), students not choosing employment (limited or lack of exposure to career options, limited understanding of disability and support needs, lack of training in self-advocacy, etc.), and lack of CRP experience to provide SE services to individuals with the most significant disabilities (lack of training and/or experience). Goals and priorities for supported employment (SE) services include:

- expanding the reach of SE services to more students prior to them exiting from high school by providing more outreach to schools, students and families
- connecting students to adult services while still in school, thereby eliminating gaps in services,
- providing students opportunities to participate in assessments and career exploration activities
- increasing student understanding and preparation for work and the chance of becoming employed

right out of high school and providing them access to a team of professionals all working towards the same goal.

2. Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including: (General)

A. the provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and (General)

DVR leverages long-term extended services that are funded by the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services or, for transition students and youth with mental health disabilities, the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. By leveraging the long-term supports through DDDS and DSAMH, DVR is able to expand supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities. DVR also uses Title I funds to supplement Title VI funds for supported employment. When extended services are not available through the support of DDDS or DSAMH, DVR will support extended services for a period not to exceed four (4) years. During the four years of DVR-supported extended services, alternate sources of extended services supports will be pursued, including the development of natural supports.

B. how the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities. (General)

Pursuant to section 603(d), DVR recognizes the requirement to reserve 50% of its supported employment allocation on transition-age consumers with the most significant disabilities and will achieve that requirement through the Early Start to Supported Employment program (ESSE). The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) collaborate with the local education agencies, community rehabilitation providers, businesses, families and students with disabilities to implement ESSE. The ESSE philosophy is that all persons, regardless of disability, are able to be employed and be successful, active, participating members of their communities. The ESSE program starts two years prior to the student exiting high school through the identification of students and assistance and encouragement to apply for services under DVR and DDDS. The program offers students an opportunity to gain exposure to work in the community and assists them with learning and retaining employment related skills. It provides a more seamless transition from school to work and alleviates student and family stress during the transition to life after high school.

o. State's Strategies (General)

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities. (General)

DVR will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in the community in order to expand and improve services including consumer organizations, public and non-profit agencies, community rehabilitation programs, education, and employers. By listening to input from stakeholders and building programs that have value and address the objectives of multiple members of the rehabilitation community, the impact of vocational rehabilitation is increased. DVR is active with the state-level WIOA Leadership Partners Meeting, a group that meets monthly, as well as the local WIOA team meetings occurring monthly on the county level. Through these meetings, DVR personnel share information about vocational rehabilitation services and learn about the wide range of services available through the WIOA partners. Other examples of collaboration include the Transition Community of Practice, the Early Start to Supported Employment, the Project SEARCH program, Supported Education, and the Start on Success Program, as well as the numerous committees and programs to which DVR staff contributes and through which DVR reaches out to the community. DVR has specifically identified the expansion of business-focused training programs for transitioning students, specifically Project SEARCH and Start on Success, as its innovation and expansion project. Additional pre-employment transition services programs for transition students have been developed, and the process of refining and expanding the business-focused opportunities will continue.

2. How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis. (General)

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation makes assistive technology goods and services available to individuals with disabilities at all stages of the rehabilitation process. DVR maintains collaborative relationships with organizations and entities that provide rehabilitation technology goods and services, including the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI), Easter Seals Society of Delaware and Maryland Eastern Shore, and with other technology providers. DVR and Easter Seals Society of Delaware and Maryland Eastern Shore jointly administer Financing Your Independence, the AT Loan Program and Telework Loan Program in Delaware and a DVR staff member is on the Advisory Board. DVR has relationships with vendors who provide a wide array of assistive technology goods and services. Counselors who have clients with assistive technology issues collaborate with one of several vendors with specialized knowledge in rehabilitation technology when serving clients with specific AT needs. DVR has a check-off item on every Individualized Plan for Employment to prompt counselors to consider AT needs for every client in the planning process.

3. The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program. (General)

DVR counselors maintain a broad array of referral sources to provide outreach services to people with disabilities in Delaware, including minorities and individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR has been working with the Brain Injury Association in Delaware, BIAD, to make an effort to reach and serve individuals with physical disabilities which has been identified as an underserved population in the on-site review process. The largest DVR office is located in the city of Wilmington, which has the largest population of minority residents in the state. DVR has a Spanish speaking counselor and a Spanish speaking District Administrator who serve the Hispanic population and provide outreach to churches and community centers in the city. DVR has a strong collaborative relationship with the local school district transition coordinators and Delaware Department of Education Special Education Coordinator. DVR receives referral information from all public and most private high schools in the state, including adjudicated youth, regarding transition students and reaches out to the students, often on an individual basis, to connect the students with DVR services. DVR has been a Delaware Pathways partner since 2016, with the goal of students with IEPs receiving equal access and matriculation through Pathways curriculum, in the public schools, aligned with Delaware labor market needs. DE DVR is working with the National Alliance of Partnerships in Equity, NAPE, to identify and address the root causes behind why students with disabilities do not receive access to Pathways curricula and work-based learning experiences when compared with students without disabilities. A substantial proportion of these students are minority students and students with significant disabilities. DVR Counselors, District Administrators, and Program Managers conduct outreach activities to advocacy organizations, other state agencies, non-profit service providers, individual and organizational health-care providers and mental health providers to offer DVR services to their clients. Specifically, DVR has partnered with DE DOL and WIOA partners to provide wrap around support for Wilmington's promise community at the Duel Generation Center, a repurposed elementary school in downtown Wilmington.

4. The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services). (General)

DVR has a long history of providing transition services that begins with developing relationships with the Delaware Department of Education, as well as leadership within each of the local education agencies, and designating a liaison vocational rehabilitation counselor for each of the high school programs in the state. Even prior to the implementation of pre-employment transition services, DVR had implemented both Project SEARCH and Start on Success and had developed a supported employment program, Early Start on Supported Employment, that focused considerable resources on transition age individuals. DVR plans to continue to expand the models currently in place while expanding on the business-based opportunities for transition students. DVR coordinates Pre-ETS programs for students during the summer and maintains several of the programs during the academic year. In addition, DVR has employed four Pre-ETS counselors who are providing services to students in the eighth grade, paving the way for these students to be aware of and participate in Pre-ETS programs while in high school. Delaware DVR co-hosts an annual Transition conference attended by 900 students, educators and family members. This conference also hosts 25 community partners who provide a variety of services to students and their families. Break-out sessions encompass the Pre-employment services.

In FY 2016, DVR implemented a focus on career pathways for all DVR consumers. Implementation included agency-wide training on what career pathways are and how to include career pathways information in vocational rehabilitation counseling and guidance. Career pathways and informed

choice are keys to assisting students and youth to identify steps in building the credentials to meet their goals. Programs at the postsecondary level, both at community rehabilitation facilities and postsecondary education institutions, are being given DVR support to develop and offer industry-recognized credentials that coordinate with employment opportunities in the local economies. DVR participates in the planning and development of the Annual Career Pathways Conference that encourages professionals, including DVR staff, WIOA partners, and education staff, students, and families to learn about career planning. A Career Pathways focus for staff and consumers continues to be at the forefront of how DVR does business.

Effective FY18, Delaware DVR became the first state in the country to embrace the National Alliance in Partnership and Equity, NAPE, who is working with DVR and DOE and specific school districts statewide, to understand why students with disabilities are not engaged in high school career pathways at the same rate as students who do not have IEPs. In FY19, a 2nd cohort of school districts began the process. Currently 6 districts have agreed to examine why students with disabilities are not matriculating in or completing high school career pathways and have developed plans to improve outcomes for students with disabilities with support from DVR. For the purpose of the project, students with disabilities is defined as students with IEPs who graduate from high school following their senior years at age 18.

5. If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State. (General)

DVR provides rehabilitation services and training to individuals with disabilities through contracts with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) in Delaware. DVR follows a request for proposal (RFP) process and solicits proposals from all CRPs in the state to provide services on a two-year cycle. DVR and the community rehabilitation programs have strong collaborative relationships. Referrals for services flow both ways.

DVR holds quarterly meetings with the community rehabilitation programs to review accomplishments and identify ways to improve effectiveness. The division has helped the community rehabilitation programs to understand changes under the WIOA regulations. In incorporating WIOA and the move towards implementing the use of career pathways, DVR is moving away from programs that offer certificates of completion towards programs that offer national industry-recognized credentials and is in the process of incorporating the requirement of industry-recognized credentials as fully as possible. For occupations for which there are no nationally recognized credentials, DVR, in conjunction with businesses, education and training providers, and WIOA partners, is moving towards the development of local, industry-recognized standards and credentials.

DVR provides training services through programs that serve both people with and without disabilities. DVR has contracts with some of these programs and seeks to identify programs that meet training needs in high demand occupations and in parts of the state where CRPs are not located or are less available.

6. Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA. (General)

DVR has established memoranda of understanding with other workforce partners that will enable the division to calculate the common performance accountability measures under Title I, section 116 of WIOA. DVR has completed memoranda of understanding with the Division of Employment and

Training and the Division of Unemployment Insurance. DVR is in the process of learning to use the SWIS system to gather additional information on employment and wages after exit. DVR maintains processes to continually monitor progress and seek ways to improve performance. DVR maintains a quality assurance process, conducting reviews of cases to evaluate quality and timeliness of services, and conformance to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act and regulations and internal DVR practices. Counselors, program managers, and fiscal staff review randomly selected case records to evaluate quality casework standards. The reviews look for accurate identification of skills gains and certification. The results of the reviews are shared with the counselors and their supervisors. They are used to evaluate the quality of services provided by DVR, and to identify training needs, performance deficiencies, and policy issues. DVR's efforts to improve services and training opportunities for people with disabilities as part of the revised RFP process are intended to improve agency performance in addressing the common measure requirements for establishing credential training programs.

7. Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities. (General)

The DVR Director is a member of the State workforce Investment Board and advocates for the inclusion of people with disabilities in all of the Boards initiatives.

DVR actively participates in the Statewide WIOA Partners Leadership meeting as well as in the meetings held on the county level. The Leadership team and county level teams share resources on a monthly basis and contribute to the planning of the Annual Statewide WIOA Partners Convening. DVR, with the WIOA leadership team, reports annually to the Workforce Development Board regarding interagency collaboration, Adult Career Pathways integration, and data collection.

DVR is co-located in the four Delaware Department of Labor locations that house the American Job Centers for the State. DVR is working with the rest of the DE DOL to promote the vision and implementation of one-stop and no wrong door. Currently, DVR receives referrals from the Division of Employment and Training (DET) and assists DVR clients in accessing the resources from the American Job Centers. DVR, through resources obtained in previously funded grant programs, has assisted DET in becoming physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities. DVR will continue to work with DET to provide training to their staff so that they are better prepared to assist individuals with disabilities.

In addition to working with resources within the Delaware Department of Labor, DVR has a strong relationship with the Delaware Department of Education and the statewide Delaware Technical & Community College. DVR and Delaware Tech have created the Supported Education to assist DVR-sponsored students to acquire academic and study skills that foster success in the educational process. The Workforce Development Board is represented on the State Rehabilitation Council, assisting the Board in understanding the impact of disability on employment.

8. How the agency's strategies will be used to: (General)

A. achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment; (General)

(A) Strategies to Achieve Goals and Priorities.

As part of the Effectiveness Evaluation and in conjunction with the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, DVR and the SRC discussed recommendation for way to address the goals and priorities. Ways in which DVR will continue to support the goals and priorities include:

- 1) Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities. The priority relates to concerns that there is the need for employment in jobs with enough pay and employee benefits to become self-sufficient. Accordingly, DVR is responding by:
 - Building relationships with business resulting in FY19 900 consumers went to work for more than 500 businesses
 - Increasing employment outcomes for consumers with significant barriers to employment
 - Increasing services to support financial independent via DVR's in-house Benefits counseling program, working in partnership with Stand by Me and by increasing referrals to local Employment Networks to support SS beneficiaries who are working to continue working
 - Insuring access to services is non-discriminatory
 - Educating clients, both transition and adults, on career pathways and the development of short and long-term vocational goals.
 - Working with postsecondary education and training providers to develop and implement credential-bearing that are geared to labor market information and career pathways.
 - Increasing the number of individuals obtaining employment through Supported Employment, including individuals identified in accordance to section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Self-Employment as part of the overall goal of increasing employment outcomes.
 - Focusing on increasing the hourly wage of employed consumers as part of a focus to increase the quality of employment outcomes.
 - Continue to provide benefits counseling to assist clients to understand the impact of employment on benefits and the positive effect of employment on independence and self-sufficiency.
 - Promote the availability of work-based learning for both students, including programs such as Project SEARCH and Start on Success, and adult, through the use of individual on-the-job training opportunities or through employer-initiated programs.
- 2) Support training programs that reflect opportunities in the labor market. The priority relates to the employment services/employment needs as well as the need for information.
 - Continued coordinating with WIOA partners and leading the Adult Pathways sub-committee to insure DVR consumers access jobs aligned with careers and labor market demand
 - Continued use of training programs that are approved by the DWDB to insure integration with Delawareans without disabilities and align with labor market demands specific to Delaware
 - Continued focus for all DE DVR consumers on Careers that align with DE DOL demands
 - Utilize employment trend information available from the Delaware Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information by:
 - a) using the labor market information to advise community rehabilitation programs in the development of training programs
 - b) seeking additional programs that offer training in fields where the employment outlook is positive, and
 - c) using labor market information during the counseling/informed choice process with DVR clients.

- Implement the use of career pathways developed by the Division of Employment and Training as a tool for career guidance.
- Continue to work with Community Rehabilitation Programs as part of the RFP process to use the labor market information to develop credential-bearing training programs that reflect labor market trends. Enable clients to make informed choices about their vocational training by providing information about the training programs through the updated Choices booklet.
- Work directly with employers and with Community Rehabilitation Programs to develop training programs that are held on-site at places of employment in the community.

3. Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work. Transition students and youth served by DVR have a wide range of disabilities and vocational needs. They require quality training programs that focus on careers available in the labor market in order to get employment.

- The National Alliance for Partnership in Equity has agreed to work individually with DE, supported by DOE and the Department of Career and Technical Education, to understand the root causes behind why students with disabilities do not access and matriculate through the labor market supported career pathways in the high schools at the same rate as students without disabilities and why students with disabilities, defined as students in high school, who graduate at age 18 and have either IEPs or 504 plans, do not experience the same rate of work-based learning experiences and are not included in all pathways. As a result, DE is now working with a 2nd cohort of 3 school districts (1 per county) specifically addressing school gaps and barriers. This project is not focused on students with disabilities who participate in HS after age 18.
- Support training for school to careers transition counselors to enable them to meet the unique needs of youth with disabilities.
- Support Pre-ETS through the provision of the five key services. Identify Pre-ETS that are offered by DVR Transition Counselors in the schools. Provide work-based experiences in the community through summer and academic year programs. Initiate Pre-ETS through Pre-ETS counselors to begin services in the eighth grade level at age 14.
- Work with the Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services to provide supported employment to common clients under the Early Start to Supported Employment program.
- Collaborate with the Delaware Technical & Community College (DTCC) to provide more training and educational opportunities for transition youth in this statewide, post-secondary educational organization. Use Supported Education to target youth with disabilities as clients who may benefit from the additional supports offered through the program in order to be successful in post-secondary education, basic education programs at DTCC. Include the provision of study skills training, tutoring and other intensive supports on campus to students enrolled in DTCC in the remedial program.
- Participate in the Department of Education in the Community of Practice (CoP) initiative to work collaboratively with parents, students, advocates, and other agencies and service providers in a coordinated and collaborative effort.
- Through the DVR Specialist for Transition, collaborate extensively with the Department of Education and local school district representatives including the implementation of a Student Success Plan (SSP) and the Career Cruising self-assessment/career planning tool for all students, including students with disabilities in the Delaware public school system. Students who are actively using these programs may offer access to the DVR transition counselors to use the programs as a plan-development tool.
- As part of the CoP, co-sponsor "The Annual Community of Practice Transition Conference: Shared Work; Shared Vision" as a collaborative effort by the Delaware Department of Education, the Division on Career Development and Transition and members of the CoP (i.e.: Parent Information Center of Delaware, school district representatives throughout the

state, and the Student Leadership Team). The conference is well attended by students, parents, educators, DVR transition counselors, transition specialists from many high schools, as well as other stakeholders involved in assisting youth with disabilities transition to post-secondary life.

B. support innovation and expansion activities; and (General)

DVR will continue the Project SEARCH and Start on Success models as the models implement business-based experience for transition youth. DVR anticipates expanding opportunities for business-based experiences through the implementation of pre-employment transition services.

Expansion of Project SEARCH has occurred with the initiation of a fourth site in Sussex County, Nanticoke Hospital.

DVR has expanded the goals of the Innovation and Expansion project to reflect the implementation of the Start on Success (SOS) program. Similar to Project SEARCH, SOS provides employer-based training opportunities for youth in transition.

C. overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program. (General)

All locations of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are physically and programmatically accessible for all DVR consumers seeking services from both the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program. Each location has accessible parking designated for individuals with disabilities. DVR locations have accessible entrances and restrooms. If DVR identifies a barrier to providing services to a specific individual, the agency moves quickly to accommodate that individual's need for physical or programmatic access. Examples of barrier removal may include changing the location of the meeting to accommodate transportation barriers, the format of the printed materials, or provision of interpreter services (sign or foreign language). DVR permits and encourages advocates, including parents and guardians, who, with the permission of the consumers, attend meetings with DVR in order to assist the individual with a developmental or intellectual disability to make decisions in their best interest.

DVR requires that its vendors also be physically and programmatically accessible and works with them to provide accommodations when barriers are identified.

p. Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals (General)

Describe:

1. An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must: (General)

A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals. (General)

Section 1. At the February 2019 meeting of the SRC, the council participated in an evaluation of DVR services and was given the opportunity to provide feedback. The feedback and responses are documented in section a of the State Plan.

Consumer Satisfaction The 2019 Customer Satisfaction Survey was designed to seek out specific ways in which DVR services could improve. As such, the participants were asked to rate a service on a Likert scale from "Very Satisfied" to "Very Dissatisfied."

- The majority of participants, both rehabilitated and not rehabilitated, rated overall satisfaction with DVR as very satisfied or satisfied with 91% and 65% respectfully. The majority of individuals closed rehabilitated (80%) and closed not rehabilitated (50%) indicated that they were very satisfied.
- When asked about their satisfaction with the ability to choose goals and services, 90% of the individuals who were closed rehabilitated and 59% of those closed not-rehabilitated also indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied. The majority of individuals closed rehabilitated (83%) and the plurality of individuals closed not rehabilitated (50%) indicated that they were very satisfied.
- Among individuals who were closed rehabilitated, 90% were either very satisfied (79%) or satisfied (11%) with their jobs.
- Respondents were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would return to DVR if employment services were required in the future. Among individuals who were closed rehabilitated, 85% indicated that they would be very likely (80%) or somewhat likely (5%) to return while 65% of those who were closed not rehabilitated indicated that they would be very likely (50%) or somewhat likely (15%) to return.

Goals and Priorities

Participants in the Effectiveness evaluation were given the opportunity to review the previously approved goals and priorities. For each goal/priority, the participants were given some additional information related to that goal. DVR has been engaged with our WIOA partners with numerous projects including process mapping, focusing on improving the referral process between partners, and the development on Career Pathways for both youth and adults. The WIOA work-teams are focused on using labor market information to identify growth industries throughout Delaware and to identify industry-recognized, credential bearing training to promote the attainment of employment in the identified industries. Participant staff from DVR ensure that employment for individuals with

disabilities remains a focus of the WIOA partners. Progress continues to be made in many of the identified work teams. Based on the information presented and subsequent discussion, the ratings of the goals and priorities was follows.

FY 2019 GOALS & PRIORITIES

GOAL 1. Provide quality employment outcome for people with disabilities. Performance Objectives and Measures

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- a. Builds Relationships with Business 4.625/5.0
- b. Employment Outcomes for Consumers with Significant Barriers to Employment 4.0/5.0
- c. Services support Financial Independence 4.25/5.0
- d. Access to Services is Non-Discriminatory 4.75/5.0

GOAL 2. Support training programs that reflect high demand opportunities in the labor market.

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- a. Helps consumers to focus on their Career Pathways 4.5/5.0
- b. Appropriate Training Opportunities leading to Business-Recognized Credentials 4.125/5.0
- c. Coordination with WIOA Partners 4.375/5.0

GOAL 3. Expand opportunities for students to transition from school to work.

Performance Objectives and Ratings

- a. Quality of Pre-Employment Transition Services 4.167/5.0
- b. Quality of Transition Services 4.167/5.0
- c. Coordination with Partners (e.g. DOE & DDDS) 3.86/5.0

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities. (General)

DVR is currently under an Order of Selection with categories 2 and 3 closed. Individuals in category 2 are being released weekly. The closure of these categories and the related fiscal issues may impede the division's ability to meet its goals of increased successful employment outcomes as well as its goals of increasing the average wage.

2. An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must: (General)

Many students in the Early Start to Supported Employment (ESSE) Program are in a vocationally focused in the 18–21 program. The ESSE collaboration has offered earlier engagement of students into the supported employment process. The early contact has increased the number of students who are getting connected to adult service providers and receiving community–based employment services prior to exiting high school. For the students who obtain employment prior to leaving high school, they can either hold a part time job along with completing high school or exiting high school prior to 21 as their goals for employment have been achieved.

For many adults with most–significant disabilities, DVR provides supported employment services for individuals who have developmental/cognitive disabilities. Adults with developmental/cognitive disabilities receive services from the same vendors as the youth participants. For adults with mental

health disabilities, DVR found that the supported employment process formerly used was not successful or evidence-based. DVR currently uses direct placement with job coaching as needed to serve individuals with mental illness.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities. (General)

There are still many families and students with cognitive disabilities who do not believe community-based employment is a viable option and choose not to pursue those services. DVR and DDDS are educating the schools, students, and families about the benefits and requirements of section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act and the need for Pre-ETS and community-based, work-place evaluation of anyone for whom sheltered, sub-minimum wage employment is being considered.

3. The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA. (General)

DVR continues to move forward towards the ability to report on the measures in section 116 of WIOA. The casework management system, AWARE, has been updated to gather additional required data. DVR has formalized, through a Memorandum of Understanding, its relationship with the Division of Unemployment Insurance for the purpose of obtaining employment data in the second and fourth quarters following closure. DVR, along with the other Core WIOA Partners, will be using the SWIS system to gather employment information regarding participants who have obtained employment outside of Delaware.

4. How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized. (General)

Innovation and Expansion: Start of Success began in Delaware in the spring of 2014. Fourteen Students were selected from the Central School and Christiana High School and the partner business was the YMCA (Central and Western locations). Since that time, the program has expanded to three school districts in New Castle County. While this has not yet occurred, the long-term goal is to expand statewide and discussions have begun to identify business and school partners in Kent and Sussex Counties.

Project SEARCH continues to grow. Whereas the first site began in 2012 in New Castle County, there are now two additional sites in Kent County and one in Sussex County. The first two sites, Christiana Hospital and Bayhealth Medical Center, have been recognized both locally and nationally for the high rate of competitive, integrated employment achieved by participants following involvement in the program. Due to the success of the existing project locations, DVR is looking for additional, suitable locations to expand the availability of Project SEARCH.

q. Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services. (General)

Include the following:

1. The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities. (General)

Section 1. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation administers the Supported Employment Program under Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act. Supported Employment occurs in an integrated setting where individuals with the most significant disabilities receive minimum wage or above for work. In the absence of the services available as part of supported employment, many of the participants would not obtain or retain employment.

The Division is focused on providing quality services through the use of the following strategies:

*Quality Assurance Reviews of all supported employment programs operated by rehabilitation providers. A representative from the administrative unit and representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation Services meet with staff from the Community Rehabilitation Programs on a quarterly basis to review progress and resolve programmatic issues.

*Oversight monitoring in partnership with long term funding agencies. At least quarterly, representatives from the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) meet with DVR program staff to address issues related to the smooth transition from DVR services to the extended services provided by the other divisions. In addition, DVR is represented on the Division of Developmental Disability Services (DDDS) Day Service Advisory Committee in which supported employment is routinely discussed.

*DVR coordinates the Customized Employment Bootcamp training that is provided by George Tilson, Ed.D, formerly with TransCen, Inc., to offer training on the discovery process, job development, business engagement and coaching to front line staff at the community rehabilitation programs (CRP), local education agencies (LEAs), DVR, families and businesses. The training program certifies staff providing services through the programs, a contractual requirement for both DVR and DDDS in regard to provider training. In 2019, the Customized Employment Bootcamp was offered 3 times due to increasing the capacity to 80–100 staff being trained per year. DVR works with the Department of Education and the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services to fund and coordinate training to provide it at no cost to participants.

*The ongoing development of training programs to maintain and increase the expertise of all staff providing supported employment services. Staff from all of the State agencies, including DVR, participates in training programs to enhance their abilities to provide supported employment services. Training opportunities include online resources, in-person trainings and statewide symposiums with other SE stakeholders in order to provide a variety of methods for staff to access training.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is currently under Order of Selection which prioritizes services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. DVR has been able to serve all individuals with most significant disabilities. DVR uses all the Title VI fund for supported employment, using 50% for youth, and funds subsequent supported employment with Title I funds.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provides supported employment services for individual considered to have the most significant disabilities and for whom long term funding has been secured for extended services, natural supports can be developed on the job or for individuals who require extended supports through DVR funding.

The division uses needs assessments and strategic plans to identify and address the needs of unserved and/or underserved populations. The need for supported employment services is evident in the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA). The CSNA also indicates the need for services for individuals with physical disabilities. Increased enrollment under the Medicaid Pathways waiver has provided additional resources to fund extended support services for individuals with physical disabilities.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation works with the DDDS and local education agencies to identify appropriate referrals for supported employment services. Primary indicators for supported employment are:

*Demonstrated inability to maintain employment utilizing traditional employment programs without extended follow-along services as the result of a most significant disability.

*Indication that, due to the significance of the disability, the individual is not likely to obtain and maintain employment in the absence of intensive services from DVR and extended services from DDDS or natural supports.

Individuals with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are identified as appropriate for supported employment services will have the following services available:

1. Supported employment career profile/assessment to identify the individual's unique strengths, resources, interests, priorities, concerns, abilities and capabilities.
2. Development of a Job Placement Plan to identify a suitable vocational goal based off informed choice and career profile data.
3. Job placement in an integrated work environment based on the results of the job placement plan.
4. Intensive job coaching/training services on-site and/or off-site to enable the individual to become stabilized in his or her employment.
5. Upon stabilization, DVR and the agency identified to provide extended services commence the transition to extended services. DVR will be the lead service provider, facilitating communication with the individual, the employer, and the extended service provider for a minimum of 90 days following stabilization.

*As indicated elsewhere, individuals with mental illness who are receiving services from the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health are primarily served with traditional DVR supports including job coaching and through the ACT teams. Individuals for whom more intensive supported employment needs, including individuals with dual diagnosis, may be served through the supported employment vendors described above.

2. The timing of transition to extended services. (General)

Section 2. Supported employment services are available to clients once placement has occurred for no more than 24 months, with the exception to youth whom may receive services up to 48 months. When circumstances, documented in the client's IPE, indicate that an extension of services will be necessary to enable an individual to retain employment, exceptions may allow the services to extend

beyond the 24-month time limit. Clients are determined ready for follow-along services when job stabilization is achieved. Although the program is flexible in order to provide for the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, stabilization is generally achieved when the individual requires job coaching supports only 20% of the time that they are working. The client, DVR Counselor, job coach, case manager, and employer must agree that work performance is satisfactory and employment can be maintained with the level of Follow-Along Services available. When job stabilization is declared the DVR Counselor starts the ninety-day count for DVR closure.

The transition to extended services begins at job stabilization. In order to increase the availability of extended services and increase supported employment, most participants in supported employment are provided with extended services by a long-term funding agency that has contracted with the community rehabilitation program providing supported employment services. When funding for extended services is not available by a long-term funding agency DVR will fund the extended services. During this period, DVR looks for alternate funding or the development of natural supports for participant's extended services in order to maximize resources, given the elimination of supported employment funds.

During the transitional period, from job stabilization to closure, both DVR and the long-term funding agency work together to insure the client will retain employment. Closure from DVR services occurs following at least 90 days of extended services but not more than 24 months post placement or 48 months post placement for youth.