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New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Program Years 2020-2023

Combined State Plan

(Draft)

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:

SRC Recommendation 1:

Clearance of wait list for Order of Selection for DVR, along with regular updates to SRC.

DVR Response 1:

DVR is on Order of Selection (OOS) and has three Priority Categories:

1. Most Significant Disabilities (open)
2. Significant disabilities
3. Non-Significant Disabilities

Priority Category one has no wait list. Priority Categories two and three are closed (wait list). As soon as DVR determines there are resources available to initiate new service plans, individuals who are not being served will be taken off the wait list in the order in which their applications were received. The client data system has the capability of sorting participants by priority level and date of application. Caseload budget expenditures and resources are monitored to determine when sufficient funds are available to release individuals from the wait list. Participants will be notified about their removal from the wait list. Individuals with less significant disabilities are provided resources in the community, such as One Stop Centers, to meet their needs. The intent of the law is to ensure that those who have the greatest need are served first.

DVR has implemented a model for releasing individuals from the waitlist. The model includes annual average cost to serve an individual on an individualized plan for employment (IPE), average cost over the lifetime of a closure after an IPE is developed, and the average years for a case to be closed as rehabilitated. DVR has released 307 participants from the waitlist for current program fiscal year. DVR anticipates releasing an additional 178 for the current program fiscal year for a total of 485 participants.

The goal for DVR is to remove the OOS. DVR will continue to analyze resources to continue to release participants from the waitlist and to determine the feasibility of removing the OOS. DVR will provide regular updates on the status of OOS to SRC.

SRC Recommendation 2:

SRC recommends involvement in selection and training of hearing officers for New Mexico.

DVR Response 2:

DVR will include SRC in selection and training of future hearing officers. DVR has recently filled the position of Chief Legal Counsel who will review the agreements. DVR will involve SRC in the selection and training of hearing officers.

SRC Recommendation 3:

SRC recommends facilitation of public forums to collect feedback regarding DVR services.

DVR Response 3: DVR will hold public forums to collect feedback regarding DVR services, including the State Plan. The forums will be held throughout the state to allow for public input from every region of the state. DVR will conduct two public forums with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners in Albuquerque and Las Cruces, New Mexico. DVR will hold additional public forums which will be facilitated as recommended by SRC.

SRC Recommendation 4:

SRC Recommends continued planning for State Plan activities in 2020.

DVR Response 4: DVR is actively engaged with the SRC. Additionally, DVR works collaboratively with SRC by providing information on the state plan, providing updates on direct client services, providing DVR orientation for new SRC members, and addressing resource needs for the SRC. DVR will continue to support the SRC in attending public forums, legislative hearings and other activities.

SRC Recommendation 5:

Exploration of public hearings in conjunction with other boards and disability service agencies.

DVR Response 5: DVR and WIOA partners will hold public hearings in Albuquerque and Las Cruces, New Mexico. Several community rehabilitation programs as well as SRC will be invited to attend and participate in the forums.

SRC Recommendation 6:

Review of SRC bylaws and responsibilities to ensure council members are fully aware of federal regulations.

DVR Response 6: DVR will review SRC bylaws with SRC members and provides updates and information on federal regulations. SRC attends the annual SRC National Conference held during the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conferences, and DVR provides information and updates from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and other federal agencies. The SRC bylaws are uploaded to the SRC link on the DVR website.

SRC Recommendation 7.

Create a training program to ensure that SRC members are fully versed and aware of services throughout the state.

DVR Response 7: DVR will continue to provide training for SRC members on VR services and resources available to individuals with disabilities. Training can occur during the SRC quarterly meetings.

SRC Recommendation 8:

The SRC has established criteria for an award honoring DVR staff, and employers that hire DVR participants.

DVR Response 8: DVR will support promoting this activity to encourage a positive, productive, and innovative organizational environment. Recognizing employees for their contributions in assisting individuals with disabilities leads to improved results. The recognition of an employer for their contribution in working with individuals with disabilities enhances employment for individuals with disabilities. DVR will assist in promoting this annual event.

SRC Recommendation 9:

The SRC will encourage DVR to initiate a public relations campaign to help enhance the image of DVR and increase awareness of disability services in New Mexico.

DVR Response 9: A consumer satisfaction survey was conducted for potentially eligible students with disabilities ages 14-21, and both current and former DVR participants. Results were shared with SRC members. DVR will use results from the satisfaction survey to facilitate ongoing public relations efforts to promote DVR services and its partnership with the SRC. DVR is planning to hire a Public Information Officer staff position to implement an ongoing public relations (PR) campaign. The PR campaign will include feedback from stakeholders, participation in employment fairs, health fairs, and career fairs for students. PR campaign will also include media submissions in publications such as the *New Mexico State Round the Roundhouse*, the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, *Albuquerque Journal* and other media outlets, including social media.

SRC Recommendation 10.

The SRC recommends that DVR establish a culturally competent outreach program for Native Americans that will meet each individual community needs and provide a consistent presence in these communities to gain credibility and establish a positive relationship with the 121 programs.

DVR Response: DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its Rehabilitation Academy. DVR has established an Interagency Agreement with the Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation program to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities ages 14 to 21. Memoranda of Understanding have been established with the tribal vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs throughout the state of New Mexico;

Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Navajo Nation VR- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), and Laguna Acoma VR. These programs provide and help with career development, improve opportunities for Native American adults and students with disabilities, and the Navajo people to enrich their quality of life in New Mexico.

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

Refer to section a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council (General)

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

None rejected.

b. Request for Waiver of Statewideness (General)

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

1. a local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request; (General)

New Mexico VR has not requested a Waiver of statewideness.

2. the designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and (General)

Waiver not requested.

3. All State plan requirements will apply (General)

Requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

Waiver not requested.

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 has developed and maintained interagency agreements (IGA) with agencies that carry out activities and which do not carry out activities under the statewide workforce investment system. Some of the agencies not under the state workforce investment system are: University of New Mexico (Partners for Employment), The New Mexico Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; The Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, The Department of Health, and the Developmental Disabilities Support Services Division, to provide supported employment services to individuals on the developmental disabilities waiver and Jackson Class members.

The Division currently has an IGA with UNM Center for Development and Disability to provide Project SEARCH in eight locations in New Mexico with Supported Employment students as part of New Mexico's Pre-Employment Transition Services "Pre-ETS" requirements. The Division also has a Memorandum with the Public Education Department to provide comprehensive vocational and education services to individuals with disabilities ages 14-21.

DVR has contracts with the Independent Living Resource Center, San Juan Center for Independence, & Choices Center for Independence in the state, services include job seeking skills training, job placement, and Self-Advocacy and supportive services.

Moreover, DVR has a Memorandum of understanding with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs throughout the state of New Mexico; Jemez Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Navajo Nation VR- OSER's, and Laguna Acoma VR. These programs provide and help with career development, improve opportunities for Native American Adults & students with disabilities, and Navajo people to enrich their quality of life in New Mexico.

DVR has an Interagency Agreement with the Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC 5), Local Educational Agencies, New Mexico School for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, New Mexico Rocky Mountain Youth Center "RMYC", Mandy's Farm, Jemez VR-Project H.O.P.E. "Hands On Preparation Experience" to provide statewide required Pre-ETS services to students with a disability which included state supported mental health & correctional facility schools.

The Division has implemented Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Local Workforce Development Boards and the American Job Centers Partners within New Mexico's counties. The development and implementation of a comprehensive system requires teamwork between the Partners to work together to establish goals, operating strategies and procedures for effective integration of workforce services. The collective development of the

local plans intends to create a foundational blueprint for economic development organizations, state agencies, community organizations, labor unions, local businesses, and WIOA adult and youth service providers. Partners anticipate utilizing coordinated services for businesses, job training, and placement activities to meet the diverse needs of both rural and urban areas within the Local Workforce Boards. The Division and partners will integrate systems and coordinate services placing priority on customer service. The Division and Partners will contribute continuously to the improvement process designed to enhance outcomes and increase customer satisfaction. Continued regularly scheduled Partner and coordination meetings are held to exchange information in support and to promote the program with staff integration.

The Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors (CPWIC) in DVR must be accredited by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and keep the required number of continuing education credits up to date. All Work Incentive Counselors (WIC) work closely local Social Security Administration (SSA) field offices with the Area Work Incentive Coordinator (AWIC) and Plan for Achieving Self-Support Cadre. Together they work to find solutions on how to help Social Security Disability Benefits beneficiaries return to work and move to self-sufficient with less dependency on public benefits. This includes providing services to Jackson class members, Pre-Employment Transitional Services (Pre-ETS) students, and Commission for the Blind participants to avoid termination of employment due to a glitch in the work incentive process. The Work Incentives Counseling includes developing individualized 1619(b) thresholds, mitigating overpayment with use of work incentives such as Student Earned Income Exclusion, and the proper use to the Ticket to Work (TTW).

DVR has six Memorandum of Understanding with local Employment Networks. This means potential and current participants holding a TTW can make use of partnership plus at the appropriate stage of the VR process. Partnership plus can be used as a post-employment services, once a participant case is closed by DVR or during the delayed status of Order of Selection until the VR process continues. When an agency or organization is interested in becoming an Employment Network, DVR connects the interested party to Maximus to start the contract with SSA and continue to support them during the process. The MOU in place so far are with Albuquerque Center for Hope and Recovery, Adelante Development Center, LifeROOTS, Mid Region Counsel of Governments (MRCOG), Best Buddies, and now Nizhonigo Careers. There was a loss of one Employment Network due to EN relocation. The EN is being contacted to continue the process.

Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) assist with self-employment, working on how earnings from different types of business structures could affect SSA calculations of benefits as well at the accounting system the participants choices for their business. WIC work with the New Mexico Small Business Development Center (NMSBDC), Accion NM, private and public accounting or book keeping services, and incubators to make sure the self-employment process is a smooth process and to prevent overpayments of benefits causing cash flow issues.

DVR Benefits Advisement Services connects with Medicaid Services at the Medical Assistance Division (MAD). DVR continues to work on the development of the Working Disabled Individuals (WDI) Medicaid pamphlets and keep in contact with the policy unit of MAD to clarify policy and procedure when participants lose Community and Home-Based Waivers or another, should loss of Medicaid mean loss of employment. DVR also attends the Medicaid Advisory Board meetings. MAD, a division of the Human and Services Department (HSD), provides clarification regarding rules given to HSD staff in considering cases.

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

Technology remains one of the primary engines for economic activity, education, and innovation in the Nation and throughout the world. Many aspects which were once only thought to help people with disabilities are used by those without disabilities moving the world closer to universal design and increased accessibility. The commitment of the United States to the development and use of technology is one of the main factors underlying the strength and vibrancy of the economy of the United States.

The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP) moved from DVR in 2008 and now administered by the Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD). NMTAP provides information and access to Assistive Technology (AT) for individuals with disabilities statewide, including schools. Operating under the US Department of Health and Human Services and Administration of Community Living, NMTAP fulfills the requirements of the AT act of 2004. Services are delivered through the main location in the greater Albuquerque area and two satellite office, located in the Northeast and southwest areas of NM. NMTAP has contracts with both the Northeastern Regional Educational Cooperative providing services out of New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM and Western New Mexico University in Silver City. All three locations provide support to students in secondary schools and their individual transition plans required by WIOA.

The four core services required under the mandate of the AT Act of 2011 include; device demonstration, device loans, financial loans, and reutilized equipment. Device demonstration provides an opportunity to compare devices. This allows the individual to decide on which device might best serve their needs.

Frequently device demonstration will result in a loan of a device. DVR participants and others may borrow the AT device for consideration for 30 days in their own environment. This allows the individual and possibly their VR Counselor to assess if the device will in fact provide access to either employment or educations leading to employment.

The financial loan component of NMTAP provides low interest loans to individuals with disabilities statewide when there are no other options or to offset DVR funds. The San Juan Center for Independence contracts with NMTAP to provide two different loans. The Self-Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (SEED) loans can help fund equipment for

entrepreneurs with disabilities by providing a low interest loan. SEED loans can help supplement a DVR participant's plan for a home-based business. Access Loans NM is the second financial loan offered, and it provides low-interest loans for AT needed when all other financing options have been exhausted. Access loan are often used for accessible transportation or modification for entering or exiting one's home.

The final core component provides used durable medical equipment and refurbished computers to people with disabilities. NMTAP contracts with two Adelante Development Center's programs for this service – DiverseIT and Back in Use. DVR participants can receive a refurbished computer at no cost to be used for their education or employment through the DiverseIT program, while Back In Use offers used medical equipment.

NMTAP also provides training statewide for professionals working with individuals with disabilities and works with DVR and other agencies frequently to educate staff about AT devices and services. Yearly, NMTAP provides training to professionals statewide at the annual NMTAP Sponsored AT conferences and at NMTAP's small one-day workshops called Hands-On Workshops of AT (HOW-AT).

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

The Division does not participant in programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States. The Division works cooperatively with other states and non-profit organizations, which includes USDA Forestry Service Division at the local level, to promote implementation of participant trainings and employment. Participants between the ages of 16 and 21 who are interested in natural resource management are provided with On-the-Job training, resource conservation skills which are relevant to a variety of careers, as well as first aid and CPR certifications, defensive driving, and ATV certifications.

The Division works with USDA Forestry Services at the local level since FFY 2011 using Schedule A applications, which has led to employment of multiple DVR participants and provided employees for Forestry Services.

DVR's Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) are required to provide information to all Social Security Disability beneficiary's receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. DVR's participants are educated about how employment and wages will affect their benefits and to provide the proper information in a timely manner to the SNAP program to prevent receiving benefits the participant may not be eligible. DVR staff are educated on location of the website to screen participants on eligibility and possible amount of SNAP. This allows participants to make sure they have the correct paperwork to become eligible while working towards a vocational goal, with the hope the participants are moving to self-sufficiency and growing income and stopping use of public benefit.

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

UNM—Center for Disability and Development currently serves an employment internship site for out of school youth and/or Supported Employment (SE) participants with most significant disabilities to have job internship/work experiences. CDD provides direct onsite internship/work experiences training slots for at least five (5) out of school youth and/or SE participants

The Social Security Administration serves out-of-school youth and refers individuals aged 22 to 26 to DVR benefits advisement. This demonstration the cooperation for DVR to assist SSA beneficiaries report income, apply for work incentives, and develop self-advocacy plans. DVR has committed to serving this age group even if the beneficiary is not yet a DVR participant or is on wait list under order-of-selection.

5. State use contracting programs. (General)

The Division previously reported legislation of the State Use contract program. A vendor was identified and the State Use contracting system is fully operational. The agency conforms to the provisions of this legislation and contracts are submitted to the State Use vendor agency for first right of refusal whenever appropriate.

The vendor for the state use contract is Horizons of New Mexico. This non-profit agency works on behalf of the New Mexico Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities to foster contracts for its members outside of the normal bid process, as long as, services are at fair market price. Horizons of New Mexico maintains a list of approved services available through its members with disabilities and the state refers to this vendor for those services.

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.

DVR is an organizational unit of and works with the Public Education Department. DVR facilitates the transition of students who are receiving special education services from the provision of a free appropriate public education under the responsibility of an educational agency. DVR also works with local education agencies to coordinate services for potentially eligible students ages 14-21 with disabilities and student referrals to the DVR field offices and provide for eligibility determination of the student for vocational rehabilitation services and the

development and approval of the Individual Plan for Employment before the student leaves the school setting.

DVR has received a memorandum from the New Mexico Public Education Department that sets forth the responsibilities of the New Mexico Public Education Department's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation ("DVR") and Special Education Bureau ("SEB") regarding transition students with disabilities in secondary education schools to transition to postsecondary education or employment. The purpose of the memorandum is to direct a basic commitment to provide comprehensive vocational and educational services to students with disabilities in accordance with the provisions of the most recent version of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act.

The agreement is designed to create common understanding and establish collaborative efforts regarding services that will ultimately improve employment outcomes for students with disabilities who may be eligible for DVR services. This interagency agreement has been revised from the April 2004 Memorandum of Understanding agreement to now focus on both students with disabilities transitioning from high school as well as adults with disabilities, who have an expectation for integrated competitive employment. DVR has Memorandum that defines necessary relationships, policies and procedures between the DVR, and the Departments of Public Education (PED). The two agencies have updated these agreements to reflect on-going projects that have enriched and deepened our relationship, understanding and program evolution. The updated agreements allow for an on-going vehicle that best reflects the updated procedures, policies and protocols established to serve potential students with disabilities and or those students with disabilities that are eligible for DVR services.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

New federal mandates require that DVR, in collaboration with local educational agencies, offer to transition age high school students with disabilities (ages 14–21) Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) using 15% of our federal allocation on an annual basis.

Pre-ETS services include:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, (after school work opportunities outside the traditional school setting including internships that are provided in an integrated environment)
- Counseling on opportunities in comprehensive transition or enrollment in postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills
- independent living Instruction in self-advocacy/peer mentoring

WIOA mandates that DVR: (1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre-employment transition services, (4) attend person-

centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is required that 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre-employment transition services, which is approximately \$3.2 million per year, and cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre-employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce. The Division hired 10 new FTE who are providing 50% of their time conducting Pre-Ets. This is the first step in expanding FTE's for the Division to meet PRE-ET's requirements outlined above as well as with an interagency agreement with the Central Regional Educational Cooperatives and Educational Institutions. Additionally, DVR will reclassify four FTE positions to 100% Pre-ETS Counselors in fiscal year 2020.

In order to reach those goals DVR is ensuring they have a strong relationship with the local school districts local Work Force Development Boards and community providers. Summer work experiences, work place readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and other work-based learning experiences have been implemented and will continue to expand as the population of high school students we serve increases.

Per DVR policy Students with Disabilities & Youth with Disabilities are recommended to apply for DVR services at least two years prior to graduation. DVR staff will use engagement and motivational interviewing techniques when working with this population. DVR, in collaboration the local education agency, will provide services to assist the student in developing and successfully achieving their Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) goal.

On a statewide basis, DVR has assigned each high school and Charter to a designated counselor, they will provide information and referral, Pre-ETS, advocacy, technical assistance, and to promote collaboration among consumers, parents, adult service providers, and other service agencies. DVR transition staff consists of a Statewide Transition Coordinator and 10 Supervising Counselors who will provide 50 % of time to Pre-Employment transition services. This lead responsibility includes coordination of Pre-Employment activities in schools assigned to their region. Training of other DVR staff and involvement in various local transition councils and statewide transition initiatives.

To facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, DVR will:

Continue to have counselors assigned to each school district. It is the role to provide pre-employment transition Services, technical assistance, information and referral to the secondary education officials in their assigned schools and districts as well as to assure the provision of direct services to eligible students with disabilities. DVR staff attends Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, with consent from the student and family. DVR is also available to provide information and technical assistance on transition services to teachers, parents, and other organizations and councils.

Maintain the Interagency Agreement with the Public of Education (PED) and Departmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Local Educational Agencies, Regional Educational Cooperatives agencies, and community providers.

DVR utilizes these agreements as the official document to guide its coordination of transition activities for students with disabilities as they move from school to post–high school vocational rehabilitation services with education officials and with long–term care and employment support providers.

It is understood by all DVR staff working with transition age youth that their responsibility is to coordinate with the school’s efforts to engage the students with disabilities in activities that will allow developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies *under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.)*; and development of an individualized plan for employment before the student leaves high school.

Order of Selection was implemented in February of 2011. Memoranda of Understanding with Local Education Agencies have been revised to address Order of Selection. The only Order of Selection category opened currently is Priority I: Most Significant Disability. There is currently a waiting list for those determined eligible under Priority II: Significant Disability and Priority III Non-Significant Disability. Waiting lists are anticipated to be necessary in FFY 2021. The Individual Plan for Employment must, at a minimum, identify the long–term vocational rehabilitation goal, intermediate vocational rehabilitation objectives, and goals and objectives related to enabling students with disabilities to live independently. These vocational rehabilitation goals and objectives are to be consistent with the student’s individual education plan (IEP). The Division makes every effort to develop and implement the transition student’s Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to leaving high school. The Division’s role and responsibilities are defined by a formal plan developed by the Public Education Department and, as appropriate, memoranda of agreement with local educational agencies responsible for the free appropriate public education of students with disabilities receiving special education services.

The agreements with individual Local Education Agencies identify: 1. Policies, practices, and procedures that can be coordinated between the agencies, including definitions, eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services, policies and procedures for making referrals, procedures for outreach students receiving special education services and in need of transition service, practices and procedures also address time–frames for evaluation and follow–up with students; 2. The roles of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; 3. Procedures for providing training, consultation, and technical assistance to assist staff of State and local educational agencies as

to the availability, benefits of, and eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services; 4. Available resources, including sources of funds for the development and expansion of services; 5. The financial responsibility of each agency in providing services to students with disabilities who are receiving special education services consistent with State law; 6. Procedures for resolving disputes between the agencies that are parties to the agreement; and 7. All other components necessary to ensure meaningful cooperation among agencies, including procedures to facilitate the development of local teams to coordinate the provision of services to students with disabilities, sharing data, and coordinating joint training of staff providing transition services.

The Division works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to all public high schools throughout the state. Division counseling staff and Rehabilitation Technicians are deployed on a regional basis. Area Division Program Managers and local counseling staff work with local education agencies (LEA) to ensure that students with disabilities are afforded the opportunity to apply for vocational rehabilitation services. Referrals are made at the local level from local education agencies or schools to the Division's field offices. DVR serves 89 school districts throughout NM, plus 87 Charter schools where Pre-ETS are being served. DVR staff are assigned a school and work in collaboration with LEA to attend Individual Educational Plans and deliver Pre-ETS.

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)

Currently the Division is establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving local Regional Educational memberships, states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

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)

The Individual Plan for Employment must, at a minimum, identify the long-term vocational rehabilitation goal, intermediate vocational rehabilitation objectives, and goals and objectives related to enabling students with disabilities to live independently. These vocational rehabilitation goals and objectives are to be consistent with the student's individual education

plan. The Division makes every effort to develop and implement the transition student's Individual Plan for Employment prior to leaving high school. The Division's role and responsibilities are defined by a formal plan developed by the Public Education Department and, as appropriate, memoranda of agreement with local educational agencies responsible for the free appropriate public education of students with disabilities receiving special education services.

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 Public Education Department, of which DVR is a division, is the State Education Agency (SEA). The Memorandum of understanding with the Public Education Department serves to facilitate the integration and coordination of services to eligible secondary education students in providing a continuum of services that will meet the needs of all Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) eligible students. The integrated continuum of services is to be flexible enough to meet the needs of all IDEA eligible students to qualify for DVR services within the available resources, maximize opportunity for students and eliminate limitations and obstacles. Currently, Public Education Department is working with Regional Educational Cooperative Memberships to establish intergovernmental agreements.

The Memorandum further outlines: A. Assure that all students with disabilities as defined by the IDEA and its implementing regulations receive appropriate services; B. Coordinate services to students with disabilities so as to maximize learner outcomes and provide for a successful transition to appropriate employment as specified in student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); C. Formalize referral procedures with appropriate agency(ies) to ensure students with disabilities are provided with opportunities for services; D. Coordinate services delivery and follow-up/along with the education/rehabilitation services continuum; E. Establish joint trainings to provide staff development and other training activities for Local Educational Agency (LEA) transition specialists and other individuals involved in transition planning. F. The current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Mexico Public Education Department was executed in 2004 and remains in effect. Review of the MOU indicates that required elements are in place and a revision process is underway.

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

The Memorandum with the Public Education Department as the (SEA) defines responsibilities of both the SEA and designated state agency (DVR) for leadership, consultation and technical assistance to educational agencies in planning and providing transition services (including VR services) to students with disabilities. This includes technical assistance to aid in facilitation of student IEPs, as appropriate. The MOU identifies NM Public Education Department as the lead agency, establishes that no funds will be exchanged between the parties under the MOU, and provides procedures for dispute resolution between the parties under the MOU. The MOU

describes processes for reporting by DVR to NMPED regarding VR counselor assignments to New Mexico high schools and service information provided to schools, students and families.

The agreements with individual Local Education Agencies identify: 1. Policies, practices, and procedures that can be coordinated between the agencies, including definitions, eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services, policies and procedures for making referrals, procedures for outreach students receiving special education services and in need of transition service, practices and procedures also address time-frames for evaluation and follow-up with students; 2. The roles of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; 3. Procedures for providing training, consultation, and technical assistance to assist staff of State and local educational agencies as to the availability, benefits of, and eligibility criteria for vocational rehabilitation services; 4. Available resources, including sources of funds for the development and expansion of services; 5. The financial responsibility of each agency in providing services to students with disabilities who are receiving special education services consistent with State law; 6. Procedures for resolving disputes between the agencies that are parties to the agreement; and 7. All other components necessary to ensure meaningful cooperation among agencies, including procedures to facilitate the development of local teams to coordinate the provision of services to students with disabilities, sharing data, and coordinating joint training of staff providing transition services.

The Division works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to all public high schools throughout the state. Division counseling staff and rehabilitation technicians are deployed on a regional basis. Area Division program managers and local counseling staff work with local education agencies to ensure that students with disabilities are afforded the opportunity to apply for vocational rehabilitation services. Referrals are made at the local level from local education agencies or schools to the Division's field offices.

Services provided by DVR in collaboration with the Regional Education Cooperatives (REC) who are eligible or potentially eligible for DVR services include: Job Exploration Counseling, Work-based learning experiences such as internships, counseling on opportunities for postsecondary training, Job readiness skills training to develop social and independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills. These required Core PRE-ET's services are currently being provided in Conjunction with REC's under the Divisions PRE-ET's IGA with CREC. Under this IGA CREC has hired 23 Vocational Transition Specialist and 2 Transition Coordinators to provide Statewide PRE-ET services. Implementation of effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces; developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment; providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with

transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.).

e. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations (General)

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(3)). Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

The Division ensures the appropriate use of community rehabilitation programs to the maximum extent feasible. The Division purchases a broad range of services for clients through local community rehabilitation programs.

These services consist of but are not limited to: Medical, neuropsychological; psychiatric, psychological, social, and vocational services; Testing, fitting, or training in the use of prosthetic and orthotic devices; Recreational therapy; Physical and occupational therapy; Speech, language, and hearing therapy inclusive of purchase of hearing aids; Psychiatric, psychological, and social services, including behavior management services; Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs; Rehabilitation technology; Assistive technology; Job development, placement, and retention services; Orientation and mobility services for individuals who are blind; Extended employment; Psycho-social rehabilitation services; Supported employment services and extended services; Services to family members when necessary to the vocational rehabilitation of the individual; Personal assistance services; Services similar to the services described above.

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

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.8(b)(4)). 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.

Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services:

Supported employment services provided by the Division consist of case services made available through the Title VI-B funds of the Rehabilitation Act. Title VI-B funds for Federal FY 20 equaled \$244,500.00 and is split 50:50 between Adult SE and Youth SE services. Title I funds of the Rehabilitation Act (available for general, basic vocational rehabilitation services) are used for supported employment services upon depletion of Title VI-B funds. The Division procures supported employment services on a case-by-case basis from local rehabilitation programs that have committed long-term funding to the individual participants. Area supervisors conduct direct negotiations of fee for service procurement schedules of supported employment services. The local area supervisors, counselors, Statewide Supported Employment Coordinator

and administrative staff monitor the scope and quality of supported employment services available to DVR participants. Supported employment service providers are required to submit monthly reports to the Division including the local area counselor and supervisor. Reports highlight client progress and satisfaction, as well as pertinent demographic data. The review, compilation, and analysis of the monthly cumulative reports obtained from the contract vendor enable the Division to monitor the quality of job coaching. The DVR counselor reviews these reports with the contract provider to ensure that the scope of services comply with supported employment guidelines and are consistent with the vocational needs of the participant.

The quality of supported employment services is measured in terms of integration achieved by the individual at the work-site along with the amount of wages earned. To increase the level of integration, the Division emphasizes the individualized placement model. This information is documented in the participant case files and monitored on a monthly basis. The scope and extent of services provided to clients under the Individualized Plan for Employment for supported employment continues to be the same as those available to individuals under the Title I program. This is in accordance with Division operating procedures. All services are provided on an equitable basis within the constraints of available funding. The Division currently has an IGA with UNM Center for Development and Disability that seeks to educate, train, and facilitate best practices in Supported Employment services to the Division's employees, other state agencies, and vendors providing SE services.

DVR has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memorandum of Agreements (MOUs) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), Albuquerque Public Schools (APS), as well as the Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD). These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating the transition from Title VI-B funding to a long-term funding source for Supported Employment Services. The transition to extended employment occurs when the time spent by the job coach with the DVR participant in a supported employment program decreases to an average of 8 hours (20%) per week or less.

*****DVR is aware that under the proposed provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that 50% of allocated SE funding will be utilized towards services to youth.*

In FFY19 the Agency updated the IGA with DDSD. This update directs appropriate referral and timelines of supported employment (SE) service to maximize efficient, effective service provision.

The Human Services Department (HSD) provides administrative support to and houses the Behavioral Health Collaborative to provide a long-term funding mechanism for Behavioral Health recipients. Behavioral Health Services and funding is allocated through the Collaborative to provide comprehensive and vocational services to individuals with significant disabling mental illness. Both mechanisms mentioned above are used to fund long-term supported

employment services and extended services. The Division has a representative on the Behavioral Health Collaborative Board.

To expand programs and services to students with disabilities and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services; DVR has developed intergovernmental agreements with the Center for Developmental Disability to implement Partners for Employment initiatives and Project Search.

Project Search is in its sixth year of achieving successful employment outcomes for Transition youth that are eligible to receive Supported Employment services. The UNMH Project SEARCH program was the first Project SEARCH site in the state, and its initial cohort of interns was highly successful, placing all interns who graduated into competitive employment by the end of the program year, and earning the prestigious 90-99% Employment Placement Award from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Project Search National. UNM hospitals has graduated 48 interns with 33 employed in an integrated setting earning minimum wage or above. The collaborating team consists of UNMH Hospitals, Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) Transition Services, Best Buddies NM, NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), and UNM Center for Development & Disability Partners for Employment (UNM CDD PFE). On May 2, 2017, the program was renamed The Nene & Jamie Koch Project SEARCH Training Program at UNM Hospital, in honor of Former UNM Regent Jamie Koch, who was instrumental in launching project SEARCH in New Mexico.

Hilton Garden Inn Gallup is completing its 4th Project Search year, in the first three years 18 interns graduated. Ten are currently placed in jobs totaling 16 hours earning at or above minimum wage. The Hilton Garden Inn-Gallup collaboration is unique that includes Nation Office of Special Education & Rehabilitation Services (OSERS).

Embassy Suites is New Mexico's first replication site a sister site with UNM Hospitals. It's beginning its fourth program year, 24 interns graduated from the program with 17 being placed within the community earning at or above minimum wage.

Presbyterian Rust Medical Center (Rio Rancho) is completing its 4th Project Search year, in the first three program years 25 have graduated successfully, with 22 employed in an integrated setting earning minimum wage or above. This Project Search site also was the first site in NM to achieve 100 % employment Placement Award and they are on track to obtain this award again for program year 18-19.

Good Samaritan Society – Las Cruces Village, in collaboration with Gadsden Independent School District 3rd year. In its 1st program year, Good Samaritan site graduated 10 interns 8 graduates are successfully employed. Interns at this site travel over 45 minutes each way to participate in the program, with collaboration of community legislatures and community transportation company's transportation is provided for the community and participants in project search to get from surrounding communities to Las Cruces.

City of Farmington Municipal Services in collaboration with Farmington Schools, Aztec Schools, NM Presbyterian Medical services/Project Shield Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), NM Department of Health/Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD), and UNM Center for Development & Disability Partners for Employment (UNM CDD PFE). 6 interns graduated from the program and are in search of employment.

The Pueblo of Pojoaque, in collaboration with Santa Fe Public Schools, Pojoaque Schools, and Community Options is our seventh Project SEARCH site in New Mexico, with seven interns learning skills in hospitality, customer service, stocking & inventory, and retail sales. The goal is for 70% to be placed in competitive employment working minimum of 16 hours.

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include: education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, educational facilities. DVR also collaborates with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work. The goal for NM is to add one more site within the state of NM currently DVR and CDD are working to expand Project Search to other parts of the state.

VR employs four Certified Community Partner Work Incentive Counselors called Benefits Advisors and one Supervisor who acts as the Ticket to Work Liaison throughout state. The state is broken into four areas, by the number of potential Ticket Holders and people receiving Social Security by county. Services available to DVR participants include Benefits Advisement Counseling to address Social Security Disability Benefits (SSDB), which can be Title II or Title XVI to address benefits income and impact to employment. The Benefits Advisement also addresses other public benefits, such as Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Housing, and most importantly the Waiver or 1519(c) programs.

Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) have been asked to provide training to all state and nonprofit providers of supported employment, usually at the area meetings. They also assist in cases on a one on one process to help the providers and beneficiaries of SSDB to develop reports, work incentive plans, and complete SSA paperwork. The BAS has healthy, ongoing relationships with DD long term providers, Department of Health, and Partners for employment.

Project Search and Partners for Employment

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)

In advancing NM VR participants in the workforce, DVR recognizes it is a primary resource in providing potential candidates. New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a viable resource in the State of New Mexico for enhancing and building the diversity of the New Mexico's labor force and can be an integral part of any employer's search for qualified, skilled career employees. Employers are supported by a professional team that specializes in preparing DVR participants for employment through pre-employment training, college and technical education, and finally matching the best talent with the right jobs.

Personnel - DVR created the position of the Business Outreach Specialist (BOS) in 2014 to begin to shift the Agency's priorities of meeting the workforce needs of New Mexico's businesses. This position is primarily responsible to promote collaboration, develop job matches, and conduct business needs assessments.

Advancing New Mexico's economy and business climate by empowering and supporting the workforce system is the mission of the DVR

DVR is working towards fully embracing the dual customer role of serving the workforce needs of New Mexico's business community while building the needed talent through our DVR job seeker clientele. Supports offered include: assistance to business in locating candidates trained to meet their needs, focusing on the needs of the employer, sending employment opportunities to DVR staff for referral, providing resources to employers for expansion, ADA legal information/resources and other resources as appropriate. The Agency has supported the training for several staff on ADA and will obtain certification. Three managers covering each region of the state are attending the ADA training. Additional staff will obtain the training as it becomes available in the state to ensure the agency is well-versed on ADA to be able to provide ADA consultation to employers and participants. In addition, the agency's responsibility is to ensure Area Manager provide the following trainings and supports:

1. Completing and understanding Labor Market Analysis for the purposes of gaining a comprehensive competency of target occupational environment, analyzing job trends and factors, and to promote strategic placement activities for DVR participants. DVR has developed an active statewide announcement board to communicate position vacancies.
2. Staff training has been provided and will continue to be offered in efforts to increase capacity, knowledge, awareness, and understanding of the external business environment. An increase in efforts to educate staff on strategies in approaching businesses effectively to reach workable arrangements to support DVR participants to reach successful, long-term employment opportunities

3. DVR staff, Area Program Managers and Coordinators work throughout the state with one-stop centers to assist and support the mission of locating competitive integrated employment opportunities. In addition, the staff participate in initiatives to collaborate with local workforce offices on employment trends and working with People with Disabilities.

4. DVR continues efforts to secure a workable online referral process between agencies. This ensures the continuity of services between agencies and encourages a seamless process between available resources and supports.

DVR is partnered with the Road Runner Food Bank (RRFB) to develop and provide training for individuals with disabilities in a multifaceted setting. The training programs continue to expand and in 2017 a training program and employment position within RRFB was developed for a Quality Control Specialist.

DVR will work with businesses throughout New Mexico to promote VR participants and identify training models that will facilitate skill development specific to the employment opportunities offered by the employers.

4. Based on a guidance letter from the Department of Labor, the Agency will work with local one-stop centers as a core partner to achieve the following:

- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance including Skill-to-Work programs, pre-screening applicants, offering rooms for job fairs and interviewing, and consultant services which are Agency specific such as ADA Training and disability etiquette training for existing employees.
- Expand workforce services for individuals at all levels and skill of experience.
- Train one-stop staff on the basic eligibility requirements for DVR throughout the state.
- Utilize the integrated nature of one-stop centers to increase customer participation and engage, support local businesses, and strengthen partnerships.
- Continue to work with local one-stop centers to obtain physical and programmatic accessibility assessments to ensure each center is meeting modern accessibility standards to individuals of all skills levels and abilities as required in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Work collaboratively with State and Local Workforce Development Boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions. DVR has Agency representatives on each of the four Workforce Development Boards.
- DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop's daily operations.

Benefit Advisement Services work with employers with filling out paperwork on Subsidy. Subsidy is a work incentive for people who receive Social Security Disability Benefits and assist in determining countable income for SSA to consider at application,

recertification, and decisions about payments. This allows the participant to remain eligible for medical insurance to help cover the cost of treatments to keep employee working. To date BAS has help with Subsidy with a local art dealer, University of New Mexico, state government, a local convenience store, and the Santa Fe Opera.

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

Youth Development Incorporative (YDI) and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), are establishing a collaborative partnership to facilitate the transition of youth (ages 14 to 21) from YDI Educational programs to the achievement of their desired post-school outcomes, with a focus on employment; post-secondary education; training and lifelong learning; community participation; and healthy lifestyles; as well as facilitating provision of transition services to all participants who attend YDI programs.

The Division has increased its collaboration through participation with provider agencies; as well as independent and statewide entities to promote “Employment First” principles for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individuals Plans for Employment. Although the navigator program is completed, it did serve to increase awareness of vocational rehabilitation services and employment -related needs of People with Disabilities at local One-Stops. The result is that One-stop staff have established and continue to maintain contact with DVR Counselors throughout the state and DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop and is fully integrated in the one-stop’s daily operation. DVR plans to co-locate in Farmington one-stop office by the end of SFY 20.

Please see Section f. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services (General) for information regarding Project Search. This is an example of coordination with employers to provide required pre-employment transition services to students in addition to services for out-of-school youth. Further coordination with employers continues to be developed through the collaborations described above.

DVR Benefits Advisement Services have had training the trainer for Money Smart to provided Pre-ETS training on financial literacy and has developed a relationship with Albuquerque Public School systems to help with benefits literacy on working while on Social Security Disability benefits. The training includes parents and guardians who have heard myths about what happens to Social Security and Medicaid while working.

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 DVR Benefits Advisement Services (BAS) Coordinator attends the Medicaid Advisory Council meeting quarterly to observe changes being required of the Medicaid agency, while reminding and updating all council members about employment issues and Medicaid. The Benefits Advisement Services Coordinator maintains a relationship with the Medicaid eligibility trainers and supervisors and has since added a relationship with the policy and procedure unit of Medical Assistance Division which, administers the Medicaid program. Benefits Advisor Coordinator has worked with Medicaid personnel to align wording in the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) and its interpretation in the field, when people eligible for Medicaid have been erroneously been terminated.

In addition, DVR maintains professional relationships with University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM CDD). DVR staff have developed short training videos on different working issues and have teamed with UNM CDD units to provide statewide trainings.

The latest Medicaid state plan has been provided to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, requesting an increase in premium payments for those people working and a change to align the co-pays across the board. This plan is expected to be approved with no amendments.

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

In FFY19 the Agency updated the Intergovernmental agreement with Developmental Disability Services Division (DDSD). This update directs appropriate referral and timelines of supported employment (SE) service to maximize efficient, effective service provision. The MOU is the mechanism used to address referral, exchange of information and confidentiality of personal information used as part of eligibility determination of individuals served in common with the New Mexico Developmental Disability Services Division (DDSD). It facilitates the coordinated planning of programs and of service definitions between DVR and DDSD regarding individuals who are jointly served by the two agencies.

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

The Division does not target specific disability groups to provide supported employment services. However, long-term support funding by the State is currently available for those individuals who are either developmentally disabled or who have significant disabling mental illness.

Behavioral Health Services are administered through state-wide Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO).

DVR is a member of New Mexico's Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative. During the past four years, work continued toward intra-agency collaboration specifically dealing with

behavioral health services among all 17 agencies/divisions of the BHPC. Under the terms of an agreement reached with the State Behavioral Health Services Division, DVR continues to facilitate and monitor employment services for people within the BHSD system and to assist others in making connections with that system. Coordination of services among BHSD, DVR, regional employment providers, and mental health providers can increase successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

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;

DVR Staff Development Unit works closely with Human Resource department to analyze personnel needs and resources. In addition, Management staff regularly review staffing issues to assist in planning for future staffing needs for the betterment of the agency. Staff Development unit is specifically assigned to maintain training databases in order to design training initiatives necessary to support staff their various positions and job tasks as assigned within the agency. DVR is committed in supporting staff towards educational experiences that builds on their fundamental expertise to support the overall goals and mission of the agency. In consideration of WIOA, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development guidelines, the agency is committed to ensuring Vocational Rehabilitation staff is appropriately supported in training and professional development through various methods.

- **Personnel Data and Projections**

DVR is committed to employing and retaining qualified vocational rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessional personnel. DVR has a data system that maintains employee information and tracks date of hire, official job classification, job functions and office/area assignments.

The total number of counselors employed corresponds with a ratio of approximately one counselor per 27,571 of the general population, the number of positions filled as allowed by the

State Personnel Office, and the available budget as approved by the State Legislature and Congress. Under this current methodology, the Division has 76 caseloads, of which ten caseloads are assigned as VR Counselor Supervisor positions; DVR was successful in obtaining approval from New Mexico Legislature these positions to serve as VR Counselor Supervisors. These 76 caseloads serve a statewide population base of 2,095,428 based on 2018 Census Data. Based on the Census Data New Mexico had a projected growth rate of 1.6% from 2010 to 2018.

Additional efforts to increase DVR personnel will continue in order to establish workable caseload sizes. The Division has determined that 10 new counselor positions will be necessary to adequately meet the growing population needs and provide the appropriate support to our Transition students. Therefore, expanding the Vocational Counselor positions and increasing to 86 caseloads is ideal. Other staffing initiatives include reclassifying the Transition Coordinator to a Transition manager to provide supervision to 10 Transition Pre-employment transition services. Further, DVR will also need nine Employment Specialists to assist in job placement and employer engagement efforts.

Other collaborative efforts in development of interagency agreements with the Central Regional Educational Cooperatives, which have resulted in 21 Vocational Transition Specialists available to support outreach efforts to Transition age population across the state.

The agency has expansion goals for positions in the following personnel categories, three Field Financial Specialists, nine Transition Counselors providing 100 percent of time to transition services, nine employment specialists conducting job development and placement services. This goal will remain a priority of the agency as will the effort to reduce the vacancy rate to under 10 percent.

When fully staffed, the Division employs 165 direct service positions consisting of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Supervisors, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Rehabilitation Technicians, Administrative Assistants and Caseload Secretaries in the Rehabilitation Services Unit (RSU). DVR will reclassify the Caseload Secretaries in RSU to Rehabilitation Technicians. Other RSU staff are Transition Coordinator, Staff Development Manager, Financial Operation Specialists Supervisor, Financial Operation Specialists, Benefits Advisor Manager Benefits Advisors, and Supported Employment and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coordinator.

There are 66 vocational rehabilitation counselor positions for the 66 caseloads located throughout the state and ten VR Counselor Supervisors. The Division also employs 34 rehabilitation technicians and 21 caseload secretaries providing direct services to DVR clients. As mentioned above DVR will reclassify the Caseload Secretaries to rehabilitation Technicians. The ratio of two Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to one rehabilitation technician will be initiated this current program fiscal year. The ratio varies throughout the state given the available resources. In various offices located in rural New Mexico, DVR staff is comprised of one counselor and one rehabilitation technician.

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

The agency has expansion goals for positions in the following personnel categories, nine transition counselors providing 100% transition services, nine employment specialist providing job development and placement services. This goal will remain a priority of the agency as will the effort to reduce the vacancy rate to under 10 percent.

Staff Development Unit is also responsible for providing updated training information to include Licensures, Certifications and various training completions relevant to their positions. Staff participation in trainings is monitored in databases, which are routinely reviewed to ensure information is accurate. SDU Staff is also responsible to ensure professional staff acquire the required licensure or certification for their positions. The Division employs 12 individuals with Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation, 8 of which provide direct caseload supports. Another eight certified individuals occupy other professional positions located in the Division as follows:

Administrative Services

RSU Deputy Director = 1

RSU Field Operations Directors = Three Positions

RSU Program Managers = Three Positions

Training Manager = One Position

The Division encourages eligible staff to attain and maintain CRC designation.

34 - Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are degreed at the master’s level.

35 - Counselors are currently licensed by New Mexico Public Education Department.

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.

	<u>Total Positions</u>	<u>Current Vacancy</u>	<u>Projected vacancy</u>
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	66	8	8
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Supervisor	10	6	2
Rehabilitation Technician	31	5	5

Caseload Secretary	15	9	5
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B. Personnel Development. 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:

New Mexico Highlands University is the only in-state college providing a Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling Master’s Degree.

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

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains a relationship with New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU), Las Vegas, New Mexico. NMHU is the only in-state college that provides a graduate program in Vocational Rehabilitation and accredited by Counsel for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs. Currently, NMHU has 175 students currently enrolled in their graduate Counseling Programs and 25 of those students identified in the Rehabilitation track. NMHU has graduated 34 individuals from the Rehabilitation program total for the academic years of 2017, 2018 and 2019.

iii. the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of these 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.

NMHU reports no current students declared in Rehabilitation Counseling supported through RSA dollars, grants or scholarships.

All graduates of NMHU’s Rehabilitation Counseling Program are eligible to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. New Mexico Highlands University currently has no data to report on licensed graduates in New Mexico or other states.

Goal/Activity:

In further maintaining and developing a strong relationship, NMHU will continue to request DVR presence on their curriculum Advisory Council to ensure that coursework be aligned with Agency goals. DVR will review collaboration efforts in terms of hosting interns from NMHU to complete their internship within DVR. Individuals from within the agency have taught courses in Foundations of Rehabilitation, Transition, and Job Placement at New Mexico Highland University for the Rehabilitation Counselor program.

New Mexico Highlands University remains as an accredited program and their accreditation is valid through 2020, however the school is reviewed annually in order to hold full accreditation.

2. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel.

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.

DVR utilizes various information to plan for projected needs to expand the number of FTE's as well as realign distribution of work accordingly within the agency to best meet our participant needs. Management staff continually meet to discuss the various staffing issues and determine the agency need in planning for vital positions. Management and Staff Development Unit collects Human Resource data, Agency initiatives, Federal standards as well as field data to plan for upcoming staffing needs. The information collected provides Management information on upcoming retirements, vacancy rates, educational requirements and new FTE development. To predict future needs, DVR management consistently review workforce data to plan for and predict staffing in order to avoid service delays to participants. Staff Development Unit will work closely with Management as well Higher Education establishments to provide develop and support potential recruitment possibilities.

The implementation of Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act has provided the agency the opportunity to expand the pool of eligible applicants for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions. The previous standard to employ at the master's degree level has been amended to bachelor's degree, per WIOA. WIOA has also expanded the definition of related degrees considered appropriate to meet the educational standards of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to work effectively in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation. Although the agency has made many efforts to obtain qualified employees, the goal remains to lower the vacancy rate and maintain current staff.

In response, the Division has implemented strategies that have influenced significant reduction in the turnover rate and will provide a valuable incentive to employee retention.

- 1) Employees of the Division are covered by the State Personnel Act:
- 2) The Division has committed to hiring and compensating staff at competitive salaries (appropriate placement); The Division is also making strides to offer opportunity for internal advancement based on educational accomplishments. The agency intends to review current VRC pay bands to provide variances based on educational and certification qualifications. Career ladder opportunities with the approval of 10 new Supervising Rehabilitation Counselor opportunities.
- 3) State of New Mexico employees are offered a competitive employment benefits package, including premium health care coverage and having the option to retire with

25 years of services (75% of average of top three years' salary) for staff hired before 2012 and 30 years of service thereafter;

- 4) State Personnel Board Rules allow for VR Counselors to be paid a supervisory differential for assuming supervisory responsibilities inclusive of training staff in effective case management and best practices;
- 5) The Division offers training and continuing education opportunities not available with other state agencies.

The Division experiences some barriers in hiring qualified staff particularly in isolated work locations. The State Personnel Director, pursuant to the direction of the State Personnel Board, establishes, maintains and in conjunction with state agencies, administers a pay plan for all positions throughout the classified service. The State Personnel Director conducts an annual survey of Total Compensation (means of all forms of cash compensation and the dollar value of the employer-sponsored benefit package.)

The comparison market is comprised of private and public entities within the state of New Mexico, regional state government employers from the Central, Western, and Southwestern areas. The pay plan offers many compensation tools for agencies to utilize to help management attract qualified applicants as well as retain employees who contribute to the overall success of the organization, motivate employees to maintain high standards of productivity and service, and reward employees for their specific contributions to the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives.

The Division has committed funds for efforts to ensure that all personnel, particularly Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, meet the highest requirements in the state applicable to that profession. In providing for training programs, the Division takes into consideration succession planning and capacity building as well as evolving issues such as amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, WIOA, the Workforce Investment Act, Ticket-to-Work, consumer informed choice, etc.

The Division has been largely successful in recruiting Individuals with Disabilities as well as those from minority groups. The Division continues to hire individuals with disabilities whenever those individuals are viable candidates. Job accommodations for staff with disabilities to support job retention are made available as requested.

The Division advertises job openings on the Internet at www.dvr.state.nm.us, in addition to New Mexico State Personnel Office listings; both are available nationally to anyone with Internet access. The Division uses the State Personnel automated data system to account for the number of employees, status of individual employees as probationary, permanent, temporary, or term and related information such as salary, earned leave balance, etc. Vacancies are reported on a routine basis and used to monitor hiring activities. All new hires, promotions and transfers require the approval of the Division Director.

3. Personnel Standards

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

The Division will continue to provide training to all staff interested in increasing their job skills. The goal of Staff Development Unit (SDU) is to respond to agency initiatives in order to provide valuable internal training supports to enhance knowledge, skills and abilities to the various agency positions. SDU will continue to collaborate with internal staff identified as experienced in their respective positions to support the training of new employees in their various areas. SDU will make efforts to collaborate with Management to identify options for implementation of a mentorship modality to be adopted by the agency in order to provide an expansion of quality training and hands-on support for new staff.

The Division's strategic planning effort includes a Goal Area of Career Development and Succession Planning for all staff. The Division is aware of the need to hire and retain well-qualified staff.

DVR is proactively working toward the future in terms of career development and succession planning. With the expanded application pool based on WIOA educational standards for VRC positions there is an obvious increased need for training to new staff in specific VR topics. SDU advisory committee assists to address the many challenges and changes in our ability to support various educational endeavors that our staff may seek.

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

The Division developed state licensure for vocational rehabilitation counselors through its parent agency, the New Mexico Public Education Department in 2001. This licensure endorsed in rule by the Public Education Department is required of all vocational rehabilitation counselors working for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and is commensurate with national standards under CSPD.

In January 2002, a policy requiring all VR counselors to apply for state licensure by December 2002 was adopted. Counselors who are not eligible for the highest level of state licensure are required to be tracked through direct work experience for the established period in order to obtain licensure.

B. The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

In 2015, DVR amended the academic standard for the Job-Related Qualifications Standard to meet the new WIOA standard. The New Mexico Public Education Department licensure appropriate to VRC positions within the DVR is Primary and Secondary Education School Personnel-Licensure Requirements for Ancillary and Support Personnel Licensure in Rehabilitation Counseling Pre-K-12. DVR is working with PED to utilize five pathway options to support our VRC's towards state licensure as follows:

Pathway 1

Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling (earned from a regionally accredited college/university)

Pathway 2

Master's Degree in school counseling, vocational counseling or other related field (earned from a regionally accredited college/university); and verification of 1 year of experience in Rehabilitation Counseling

Or: 15 semester hours of credit in rehabilitation counseling in the areas of vocational/transition assessment, medical aspects of disability, psychosocial and/or psycho-cultural aspects of disability, case management in rehabilitation counseling, issues and practices in rehabilitation counseling, or placement aspects of rehabilitation counseling

Pathway 3

Bachelor's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling (earned from a regionally accredited college/university); and

Verification of 1 year of direct vocational rehabilitation job experience

Pathway 4

Bachelor's Degree in school counseling, vocational counseling or other related field (earned from a regionally accredited college/university); and Verification of 2 years of direct vocational rehabilitation job experience

Or: 5 semester hours of credit in rehabilitation counseling in the areas of vocational/transition assessment, medical aspects of disability, psychosocial and/or psycho-cultural aspects of disability, case management in rehabilitation counseling, issues and practices in rehabilitation counseling, or placement aspects of rehabilitation counseling

"Related fields" means a degree in such areas as sociology, psychology, school counseling, guidance and counseling, education, special education, social work, and mental health

Pathway 5

Possess a certificate issued by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification

DVR requires all Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to have applied for licensure and/or background check. It should be noted that new counselors have 90 days from their start date to apply for their license. Licensure application includes a criminal background check. All

applications are monitored for compliance. If new DVR counselors do not meet the experience requirement for State Licensure, they are directed to proceed with the background check, and apply for licensure upon gaining the necessary experience. Initial VR counselor licenses must be renewed after three years.

State licensure is identified in policy as top priority and required for continued employment. Identified documents to be submitted in the credentials package for licensure include:

- Official college transcripts of all degrees received
- Copy of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certification, if applicable
- Work history in a rehabilitation field
- Copies of course syllabi from courses related to counseling and guidance; vocational counseling; disability; psychosocial or psycho-cultural aspects of disability; case management in rehabilitation counseling; and placement aspects in rehabilitation counseling.
- Criminal background information
- Fingerprints

4. Staff Development.

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. 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

The Division continues to work cooperatively with the Public Education Department to issue State Licensure for Rehabilitation Counselors. The Division has informed State Personnel Office regarding the specific licensing qualifications for the Vocational Counselor position and they ensure this information is included in the recruitment and application process for potential candidates. DVR utilize the State's compensation and classification system and develop pay equity to reflect the appropriate pay schedule based on qualifications of licensed counselors. Counselors are encouraged to submit credentials and meet the qualification requirements of the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor designation, as this is the highest recognized level of a qualified counselor under the licensure rule. All new hires agency hired VRC positions are monitored by SDU to provide direction towards meeting licensure requirements.

The Division maintains a Staff Development Unit (SDU) designated to provide for professional and paraprofessional development of all staff from various training facilities. All employees are

encouraged to update their job skills and knowledge by taking advantage of training available to them. DVR supports training through funding budgeted and overseen by Staff Development Unit. Training opportunities are supported in multiple formats through various training partners.

- Internal training offered by Staff Development Unit, content matter experts within the agency
- State sponsored training and training external of the agency through institutions of higher education
- Private vendors, professional training organizations
- Partners for Employment – Center for Development and Disability
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- VR Development Group
- Staff Self-Selection - any training that a staff member identifies enhancement of related job performance with emphasis on assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology
- New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions
- University of New Mexico Career Development Services

The goal of SDU is to provide continually educational and training opportunities that are meaningful to staff to return to their respective positions in their various areas and provide quality services.

SDU provides and monitors a series of required training that is available to all new employees. DVR policy provides that all employees repeat several of these courses on a regular basis. These computer-based courses include: Fraud Awareness, Federal Grants Management, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Civil Rights, Workplace Bullying-Violence Prevention, Employee Safety Orientation, Safeguarding Protected Information, Mileage and Per Diem, Email Essentials and Substance Abuse & the Drug-Free Workplace Act. Counselors and Rehabilitation Technicians also complete on-line courses of VR 101: Determining Eligibility and Writing the Individualized Plan for Employment; VR Development Group, Comprehensive Assessment, History of VR, Job Acquisition Training, Case Management and IPE Development. A Preventing Retaliation Claims Webinar is required for Managers and Supervisors as is a yearly refresher on Employment Related Conflict Resolution. State Personnel Office also does require Supervisors to partake in State sponsored management training.

Staff Development Unit is also assigned the coordination of New Employee Orientation (NEO). This daylong event is held quarterly at the State Office and features presentations from agency leaders. The emphasis is on agency culture and “Succeeding at the DVR”. NEO on-line version is one part of a comprehensive onboarding program currently under development to increase employee engagement, immediacy of necessary new employee information, and retention by helping new staff feel welcome and appreciated.

B. Acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge

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

SDU also offers Rehabilitation Academy to new counselors and rehabilitation technicians (rehabilitation secretaries are highly encouraged to attend). Participants from the Native American partner agencies and community-based programs are invited to attend Rehab Academy when space is available. The Academy is taught over a three-week period, one week is online course work and the other two weeks are conducted in-person and focuses on comprehensive assessment, eligibility, IPE development, case management vocational counseling, job placement, Ticket-to-work, supportive employment, Independent Living Centers, Disability Rights New Mexico and transition. Sample cases studies are utilized for comprehensive learning experience. The academy is designed to follow VR processes in an effort to replicate real-life scenarios in order to educate new staff in constructing appropriate eligibility decisions, vocational goals and educated service delivery. Staff give the Academy high marks in terms of content and satisfaction with content delivery. SDU makes good use of technology available within the agency in offering the training by utilizing DVR Case management software, visual aids, videos, discussion and hands-on experience.

SDU has created an Academy training directed towards RSU support staff in terms of Rehabilitation Technicians and Vocational Secretaries; however, Program Managers and Rehabilitation Counselors are also mandated to attend. The training includes training specific to related job duties, fiscal processes, support to caseloads, and business practices adapted by the agency. All new staff as well as established support staff are encouraged to attend.

Supervisory training implementation in the upcoming year specifically targeted for the professional development of leaders within the agency. The training will provide direction in a variety of challenging management areas, which will ultimately support fluidity and high-quality service delivery to consumers. The agency has identified 12 new leadership roles with the staffing projects and SDU will work to support those individuals in meeting both agency and leadership expectations.

The Division uses a customized software application called the Training Administration System (TAS) to track employee training progress. This software provides the information necessary to summarize the training requested and completed on an individual basis. It provides the data necessary to analyze overall progress of individuals and groups of employees toward obtaining and retaining required credentials. The system offers the agency the ability to track all employees' training and enables employees to request training offered by outside entities and vendors.

SDU routinely acquires and disseminates research and information via electronic mail and Agency Intranet. Enhancements have been made to the Staff Development SharePoint webpage, which now includes training announcements, Rehab Academy materials, archived webinars, and other related training information. The SDU SharePoint page remains updated

with new training opportunities based on professional development topics related to Vocational Rehabilitation. The addition to this feature will support both management and staff to identify valuable training within related VR topics.

Assistive Technology collaborative efforts include DVR's identified AT liaisons who participate to support the annual Assistive Technology conference. Assistive Technology training for DVR staff is offered throughout the year in coordinating presentations for staff. New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP) offers hands-on access to equipment for DVR staff to learn and utilize for gaining knowledge regarding the variety of available equipment, applications for participants. NMTAP participates in DVR annual Statewide Staff meeting providing valuable learning experience.

Increased coordination efforts to provide quality trainings by supporting partner agencies has occurred and will continue to be a focus point of DVR SDU. Department of Workforce Solutions has sought assistance in acquiring disability related trainings for their staff throughout the state of New Mexico. As an established partner, DVR will work to support the acquisition of this knowledge to the NMDWS staff as it is essential in the goals and objectives set forth through the direction of WIOA and commitment identified in unified state planning. DVR has established a relationship with NM DWS training staff that will continue to benefit both agencies. Efforts will include training targeted towards increasing awareness of all staff in supporting employment opportunities, effectively providing quality services and employment for our consumers.

Currently the Staff Development Unit is understaffed; however, agency staffing objectives include efforts to fill a vacant Staff Development Specialist and the addition of a Support Staff Trainer. Overall, many training objectives for Staff Development Unit were achieved with the creation and addition of several agency trainings, as well additional supported trainings provided to a majority of the staff. Moving forward with the expansion of training opportunities SDU will continue to coordinate with leaders from other units and representation by various positions within the agency to collaborate and identify valuable trainings that maintain the integrity of the training provided to all staff.

- Counseling Skill Build-up series – offering refresher on many counseling modalities
- Self-employment in Vocational Rehabilitation – providing support from the Counselor perspective on the self-employment processes
- Job Acquisition Training – providing instruction to VR Staff in establishing Job Clubs, increasing public speaking skills, collaboration of resources with Department of Workforce Solutions.
- Supervisory Academy

The Benefits Advisement Services Program manager subscribes to newsletters from Mathematica; National Research Institute (NRI); Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment; Small Business Administration; Internal Revenue Services; Social Security

Administration; Workforce GPS; and Virginia Commonwealth University and forwards new research and best practices to Field Operation Directors.

5. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs.

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:

In New Mexico, there are large portions of the general population whose first language is Spanish or an Native American dialects. When necessary, the Division obtains the services of interpreters of Spanish and other languages. However, Division staffing, which is consistent with the percentage of minority population and the general population, includes many individuals who are able to communicate in Spanish and native languages. This is most beneficial to terms of providing services to applicants and eligible individuals with limited English-speaking ability.

Although not a requirement, the Division may give preference to individuals who are bilingual or multilingual in applying for Division jobs. Many of the Division's field offices have at least one individual who can speak Spanish or an Native American dialect. The Division's EEO Plan reflects the State's diversity.

In addition, the Division employs several individuals skilled in communicating in American Sign Language. Many of these individuals provide direct support through identified caseloads serving this population. When necessary, interpreters are hired to fulfill communication needs. Video Relay Interpreter equipment has also been installed in more rural field offices where use of live interpreters is quite limited. Staff in those offices have completed training in use of the equipment.

Telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices may be used to assist individual applicants and clients to participate in and benefit from the rehabilitation program. The Division may purchase, lease, or utilize equipment from loan banks to meet these needs, as appropriate. Division staff may consult experts in rehabilitation technology and assistive devices to address client needs. Vocational evaluations and rehabilitation engineering services are purchased through qualified vendors. Other services purchased through qualified vendors include accessibility studies, job modifications, and identifying essential functions of jobs for employers and employees. The Division also employs some staff capable of performing these services.

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

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 (IDEA):

In New Mexico, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is operating under the Public Education Department, as is the Special Education Unit, which administers state services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Division has and will continue to coordinate with the Special Education Unit and will coordinate its professional development activities with those provided under IDEA. This activity will be implemented under the auspices of the Secretary of Education. The licensure rules for Rehabilitation Counselors in New Mexico are in agreement with the Public Education Department requirements and competencies applicable to both the school systems to effect school-to-work transition in the high schools and the Division. The Statewide Transition Coordinator provides routine Transition training to all field staff with emphasize on the staff directly providing transition services. IDEA, IEP's, Diagnostic Data are all represented through Transition Services. The Transition Coordinator also provides up-to-date information to staff regarding IDEA and acts as the liaison between DVR and Public Education Department. The agency will continue to encourage Transition Coordinator to maintain board seat on IDEA, School-to-work Transition Alliance and maintain relation to support Regional Education Cooperative Memberships. The Division will assign a staff member to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) advisory Committee to represent the division. The Division will assign a staff member to the School-to-work Transition Alliance and maintain relations to support Regional Education Cooperative Memberships, and Work Force Youth Development Incorporation (YDI). It is the intention of the agency to continue cooperation and coordination with the personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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)

The Division jointly conducts with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) continuing statewide studies to determine the needs of individuals with disabilities within the State and the best methods to meet those needs. The Division periodically conducts surveys through its programs, projects and activities to ensure that the annual evaluation of effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program meets the goals and objectives set forth in the State Plan and does not impede the accomplishments of the purpose and policy of federal funding.

As part of the development of the State Plan, the State Rehabilitation Commission (SRC) conducted a consumer satisfaction/needs assessment survey to assist in gaining consumer feedback and assessing consumer perceptions of the program.

In 2019 at the direction of DVR/SRC, MA Strategies provided a comprehensive plan to conduct two (2) satisfaction surveys covering the entire state of New Mexico. The first survey solicited responses from current and former New Mexico Division of Vocations Rehabilitation (DVR) clients; the second survey solicited responses from transition students, currently receiving transition services from DVR. Two surveys were deployed through methods approved by the New Mexico State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), to at least 10% of DVR consumers, producing at least a 25% response rate. Each survey consisted of 15-25 questions, provided by the SRC. Surveys were conducted via the internet and in hardcopy format. Survey questions were provided by SRC, with each survey consisting of three parts: Part 1 assessed the services they have received related to planning for success in reaching your employment goals; Part 2 assessed the quality of services provided to individuals with disabilities statewide (general) and who are transitioning into a successful adult life (transition); Part 3 assessed the degree to which rights and responsibilities were explained to clients by their DVR Counselor. Observations discovered were that DVR provides highly valued services to a broad spectrum of both General and Transition clients, who often report these services as life changing. Satisfaction levels for DVR were high (ranging from 82% Strongly Agree/Agree to 55% Strongly Agree/Agree in the lowest rated category). Areas of strength include professionalism and respect, clear explanations of processes, responsibilities and answers to questions. Areas of concern include staff turnover, timeliness of responses and difficulties in helping clients secure employment. Recommendations included: more extensive preparation of DVR counselors to understand a wider variety of employment options tailored to the needs of specific populations who've reported difficulty in finding good fits with employers. Deeper links with employers in order to understand their needs, particularly around employability skills and skills-based hiring. More effective use of technology in reaching out and maintaining contact with clients (Universal Design for Learning, mobile and online access to current information). Better coordination with schools (K12 and Higher Education) to ensure that policies and practices address barriers cited in comments. Better integration with Career/Technical Education programs and partnerships with local employers and economic developers, as appropriate to DVR client skillsets. Effective strategies for engaging clients periodically in order to keep contact information accurate and current. Explore entrepreneurship for DVR clients to take advantage of emerging "new economy" opportunities

DVR has implemented two additional programs that are intended to expand and increase Supported Employment services throughout the state. These services are targeted to youth and individuals who have been identified as most severely disabled through innovative programs under the umbrella of Partners for Employment. The first program, Project Search was implemented in 2012–2013 to provide opportunities in collaboration with statewide school districts, and business partners in conjunction with DOH, toward access to employment opportunities that are unique and innovative in serving individuals with significant disabilities.

Partners for Employment is identified as the statewide entity to oversee and manage a variety of Supported Employment Programs. This program is intended to serve and support individuals with a variety of disabling conditions.

The Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program is designed to provide a network of providers for Social Security beneficiaries to obtain, maintain, or regain employment. DVR is no longer an Employment Network, however the division continues to work with Social Security as a VR Program under cost reimbursement. DVR provide services and information to participants related to Social Security Benefits and use of the Ticket to Work and other work incentives. Services includes five field staff located throughout the state who have completed the SSA required training and maintain certification to specialize in benefits advisement.

DVR coordinates with SSA to implement the Ticket to Work Program and obtain employment outcomes. The two units of Ticket/Security Services and Benefits Advisement services have been reorganized. The Ticket to Work-Cost Reimbursement duties within the agency have been moved to the fiscal department, who is primarily responsible for researching and requesting the cost reimbursement; placing and removing the participants from "in use" status; and requesting the appropriate backup documentation from the field. Benefits Advisement Services now take care of the program aspects of the Ticket as well as doing work incentive counseling.

Program aspects of the Ticket include instructing field staff on what is needed for a participant to move through the rehab process; providing technical assistance to field staff; advocating when a problem arises in the process of in use and medical continuing disability protection (CDR); attending SSA training and quarterly meetings; provide documentation to SSA about Ticket related issues, and assist with MOU in the community for Partnership Plus. Five MOUs with local/national Employment Networks (ENs) with one in process.

Benefits Advisors work with participants one on one, helping them move through the stages of change regarding employment while on Public Benefits. They serve people 14 to full retirement age. BASs are required to complete a Community Partners Work Incentive Coordinator certificate and choose a specialty as well. Specialties include transition issues, tax help, A Better Life Experience (ABLE), Money Smart, and Self Employment. Benefits Advisors have taken on specialties to provide technical assistance to other benefits advisors.

B. who are minorities; (General)

DVR recognizes the need to address the vocational rehabilitation needs of minorities. One such measure is to work toward the improvement of community rehabilitation programs within the

state to address rehabilitation needs of minorities, especially those in remote rural communities.

Central and Western New Mexico is a very large territory inclusive of Native communities, pueblos, and reservations. Indian Reservation land. Native American populations have access to four community rehabilitation providers through their local tribal affiliations when resident on Native land. However, for non-Native American populations access to community rehabilitation programs is limited to one provider and again funding is an issue relative to acquiring supported employment services. There are four staff in the Gallup DVR office serving a geographic community of almost 80 miles to the east, 25 miles to the Arizona state line, not less than 80 miles to the south, and not less than 50 miles to the north. Outside of Gallup the services available to Native American populations become even more limited, there is not much available in terms of community rehabilitation programs in central western New Mexico.

The Division continues to explore ways to improve services to Native American populations as well as increasing staff competencies with respect to cultural differences. Division resources will determine priority and further development of these broad general goals of Career Development, Successful Employment Outcomes, and DVR-SRC Collaboration. In addition, DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its' Rehabilitation Academy which is utilized to train staff.

To this end, DVR has updated Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with two of the 121 programs in the state. These agreements facilitate communication between DVR and the 121 program in service provision to participants being served by both a 121 program and DVR.

DVR also assigns specific staff to tribes throughout the state. This is designed to maximize service provision, coordination and on-going relationships by itinerate VR staff being available on-site.

The Division is also currently involved with project E3: Educate, Empower, Employ. The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of Individuals with disabilities. The TA will be provided on-site through long term service delivery relationships with local VR agency personnel and community-based partners to high-leverage groups with national applicability in economically disadvantaged communities (targeted communities) Identified by the VR agencies themselves.

Project E3 provides technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to VR participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of individuals with disabilities who are economically disadvantaged. This RSA/Southern U. of Baton Rouge project concentrates on five specific zip codes in Albuquerque: 87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121. This project will focus on ways to breakdown employment

barriers for people w/ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders in these zip codes. Both DVR and Community Providers will be collaborating on this project.

With DVR continued emphasis on benefit advisement, they reach many people who are on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which currently pays out the Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) of \$771 a month. FBR is 77% of the poverty level. The average Social Security Disability Benefit is \$835 in New Mexico which means most of the people served on SSDI is 83% of poverty.

New Mexico continues to be a majority minority state, with the US census quick facts showing the state has 49.1% Hispanic or Latino, 37.1% white, non-Hispanic/Latino, 10.9% Native American, 2.6 Black or African American, and 1.8% Asian American. DVR services to the state shows similar representation.

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

There are rural locations throughout the state where population is scarce and distances vast from community to community with few rehabilitation community providers. These rural locations are itinerantly served by DVR offices in larger communities with many community rehabilitation services providers stretching their resources as best they can to extend services. The Division is also currently involved with project E3: Educate, Empower, Employ. The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of Individuals with disabilities. The TA will be provided on-site through long term service delivery relationships with local VR agency personnel and community-based partners to high-leverage groups with national applicability in economically disadvantaged communities (targeted communities) Identified by the VR agencies themselves.

Project E3 provides technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to VR participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of individuals with disabilities who are economically disadvantaged. This RSA/Southern U. of Baton Rouge project concentrates on five specific zip codes in Albuquerque: 87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121. This project will focus on ways to breakdown employment barriers for people w/ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders in these zip codes. Both DVR and Community Providers will be collaborating on this project.

Under the new federal law, DVR is developing outreach strategies to combine the needs of students with disabilities and those that might have been previously referred from schools to community agencies, rather than to DVR for career and employment needs. DVR believes this new focus will dramatically change the consumers served moving forward into the near future. DVR, working with the Department of Public Education (PED), Work Force Centers, (WFC), Department of Health, (DOH), Tribal VR agencies and community contractors has increased coordination of VR services between local educational agencies, VR, & tribal VR.

Some of the partners of Coalition for Advancement and Development of Employment Training Services (CADETS) include: local education agencies such as Central New Mexico Community College and the University of New Mexico, DVR, Fathers Building Futures (a non-profit dedicated to helping justice involved citizens with re-entry), local employers, ACLU, Roadrunner Foodbank which serves as both an employer and an on-the-job training provider and others. CADETS was just recently able to extend an arm out to State Probation and add them as a partner to collaborative.

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

Collaboration with Statewide Workforce Investment System: DVR has had representatives in the State and all of the local Workforce Investment boards since their inception in 2000. Representatives address the issues and interests of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system, both in developing policy and influencing service delivery.

DVR is currently collocated with the Central One-Stop Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This consists of 2 VR Counselors and 1 VR Technician being housed out of this office in an effort for create a comprehensive one-stop. DVR is currently working towards colocation in two other parts of the state: Santa Fe, New Mexico and Farmington, New Mexico. This is anticipated to be completed in 2021. In the areas where colocation is not possible, itinerant services are being established between the local one-stop centers and the Division to create comprehensive services.

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)

Youth with a disability: Services provided to an individual with a disability, aged 14–24, not in school; or who does not qualify for services under IDEA. VR may provide youth with disabilities who are in transition from secondary school to postsecondary education and employment. The term is typically associated with services provided under the Workforce System.

Student with a disability: A student who is eligible for and receiving special education under IDEA or be considered a person with a disability under Section 504, and not younger than the earliest age allowable under IDEA or a state established age if lower, and not older than 21 or a higher age if set by state law as permitted under IDEA. Individualized plan developed by the public-school systems for a special education student which identifies educational goals, objectives and services to be provided to the student. In the state of New Mexico when a student reaches age 14, his or her IEP should also include a transition plan that addresses services and support focused towards post-school outcomes.

Services provided by DVR to students with disabilities and youth with disabilities in collaboration with local educational & community agencies to provide exploration and other services such as counseling and self-advocacy training in the early stages of the transition process.

Required activities of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) include: Job Exploration Counseling, Work-based learning experiences such as internships, counseling on opportunities for postsecondary training, Job readiness skills training to develop social and independent living skills, and self-advocacy skills.

The Division can authorize activities which include: implementation of effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces; developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment; providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); applying evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel, in order to better achieve the goals of this section; developing model transition demonstration projects; establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

With the implementation of WIOA in July 2015 the Division will now be required by law to significantly add to the demographics of clients that are served in all DVR offices. Each local office of DVR now must: (1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre-employment transition services, (4) attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is also now required to increase spending to at least 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre-employment transition services, which for DVR is \$3.5 million per year, which cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre-employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce.

The purpose of Pre-Employment services is to provide statewide support for students with significant disabilities to obtain customized and integrated support through-out New Mexico's Strategic Plan for education, "Kids First, New Mexico Wins" through the implementation of

Strategic Level 3, "Ready for Success" as measured by an increase in graduation rates and increasing the number of students prepared for college and career.

Under the new federal law Public Education Department and DVR are developing outreach strategies to coordinate the efforts of different government agencies to address the needs of students with disabilities. Continued efforts and cooperation with job center networks is valuable to consumers who can work on certain aspects of their job 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)

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

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. Starting in 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 239 disabled subminimum wage employees were served in 2019. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 of WIOA.

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

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. In 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR

vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 288 disabled subminimum wage employees were served, in which 54 of them were referred to DVR, and 7 obtained employment via DVR assistance. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 of WIOA.

DVR sponsored ACRE training for community partners:

- In collaboration with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Partners for Employment is offering a limited number of scholarships for private job developers to take the ACRE-certified Supported Employment Online Course offered by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The online course will start October 30, 2017 and runs through January 15, 2018.
- The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) awards nationally recognized Certificates of Achievement to providers of employment services to people with disabilities. This Certificate documents that the provider has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 40 hours of training or professional development provided by an ACRE-approved training resource. Virginia Commonwealth University is a member of ACRE, and the Supported Employment Online Certificate Series online course is a recognized training program.

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 has identified 17,000 students in the New Mexico public school systems that are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Additionally, we know that over 7,874 youth between the ages of 14-16 are receiving SSI and may or may not have an active IEP. New Mexico, through its partner collaborations with, UNM CDD/partners for employment, CREC, DOH and DDSD can support employment experiences, that target outreach to SSI and individuals with the most significant disabilities will allow for strategic niche for needed VR services and collaboration with the schools. DVR will continue to collaborate through the current Inner-governmental agreement with Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC 5) to coordinate of Pre-Employment Transition Services with education and long-term care services.

The Division can authorize activities which include:

Implementation of effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces, developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities

to live independently, participate in postsecondary educational experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment, providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities; disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section; coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.); applying evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel, in order to better achieve the goals of this section; developing model transition demonstration projects; establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

With the implementation of WIOA in July 2015 the Division will now be required by law to significantly add to the demographics of clients that are served in all DVR offices. Each local office of DVR now must:

(1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre-employment transition services, (4) attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is also now required to increase spending to at least 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre-employment transition services, which for DVR is \$3.2 million per year, which cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre-employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce.

DVR's goal is to increase the number of positions to ensure DVR has 10 Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, conducting 100% PreETS. This will allow DVR to continue to provide service to all school districts by conducting Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities ages 14-21. DVR plans to add two additional positions for Transition Coordinators, as well as one Transition Manager. This proposed plan to add additional FTE positions will be in the next four years. The additional transition counselors are required to assist in providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to meet the WIOA mandate of \$3.2 million. The two transition coordinators are needed to fulfill the requirement of WIOA for the Southern and Northern sections of the state. DVR was successful at obtaining 10 FTE in SFY 19. These positions are Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor-Supervisors and focus on Pre-Employment Transition Services and Supported Employment services. These positions are to carry a caseload of 50 to 65 participants. The goal is to increase the division's ability to serve more participants by 500-600 individuals with disabilities and will create a stronger service pathway for Pre-ETS students referred to Title I services. DVR plans to increase nine

Employment Specialist FTE positions to assist in supported employment and with general VR participants with skills training, job development and job placement.

The Division is an organizational unit of the Public Education Department to facilitate the transition of students who are receiving special education services from the provision of a free appropriate public education under the responsibility of an educational agency. The Division also works with local education agencies to coordinate student referrals to the Division field offices. The division conducts eligibility determinations for the student to identify appropriate vocational rehabilitation services and the development of the Individual Plan for Employment before the student leaves the school setting.

To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce. The Public Education Department, of which DVR is a division, is the State Education Agency (SEA). Currently the memorandum of understanding with the Public Education Department serves to facilitate the integration and coordination of services to eligible secondary education students in providing a continuum of services that will meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The integrated continuum of services is to be flexible enough to meet the needs of all IDEA eligible students to qualify for DVR services within the available resources, maximize opportunity for students and eliminate limitations and obstacles. Public Education Department is working with Regional Educational Cooperative Memberships to establish intergovernmental agreements.

Currently the Division is establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving local Regional Educational memberships, states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

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)

The number of New Mexicans with disabilities is estimated to be 217,924. The agency estimates approximately 2,100 individuals will be found eligible for services

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

A. The VR Program; (General)

Estimated number to be Served: 6,100

B. The Supported Employment Program; and (General)

Number of eligible individuals in the state who will receive services provided with funds under Part B Title VI Estimate = 350.

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

Category (non–Pre-ETS)

Priority 1: Most Significantly Disabled Title I: 2456

Priority 1: Most Significantly Disabled Title VI: 350

Priority 2: Significantly Disabled Title I: 3,172

Priority 3: All Other Eligible Title I: 122

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)

DVR immediately serves individuals with the most significant disabilities (OOS Category 1). Individuals with significant disabilities (OOS Category 2) and all others eligible (OOS Category 3) are placed on a waiting list. DVR has been on active order since August of 2018 and currently remains on order with the intention to monitor budget availability to serve all eligible individuals timely.

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)

DVR anticipates state matching funds through State FY 2020 necessary to draw down all available federal match. The estimates below are based on receipt of full state matching funds.

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is under an Order of Selection. The table below provides estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order.

Category (non-Pre-ETS)	Priority	Estimated Funds	Estimate # to be served	Average Costs of Services
Title I: Most Significantly Disabled	1	\$3,420,000	2,456	\$1,392
Title VI: Most Significantly Disabled *50% of title VI funds are designated to	1	\$244,500	350	\$698

serve youth with MSD				
Significantly Disabled	2	\$3,860,000	3,172	\$1,216
Title I: All Other Eligible	3	\$150,000	122	\$1229
Total Estimated Funds			6,100	\$7,674,500

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 DVR and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions.

Mission Statement: The mission of the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to encourage and assist the efforts of New Mexicans with disabilities to reach their goals for working and living in their communities.

Vision Statement: Every New Mexican with a disability has the opportunity to contribute to the quality of life and the economic prosperity of the state.

The State Rehabilitation Council and the Division jointly reviewed the results of the 2019 Satisfaction Needs survey with input from the SRC. The participant satisfaction survey is addressed in the State Plan. DVR plans for a comprehensive statewide needs assessment to be conducted in State Fiscal Year 2021 and will include SRC in the planning phases as well as reviewing results.

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

State Goals and Priorities will now need to align with the new Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. These measures include: Employment in the 2nd quarter, Employment in the 4th quarter, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, Measurable Skills Gains, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Via the RSA-911, DVR has submitted Common Performance Measures for the 1st quarter program year 2019. DVR will continue to submit performance data per RSA-911 reporting specifications. The performance measures in program years 2018 and 2019 will set a baseline of program accountability measures in 2019 and 2020

As a core partner for local one-stops throughout the state, DVR has achieved and will continue to achieve the following:

- DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop's daily operations. DVR plans to co-locate in the Farmington and Santa Fe one-stop offices by the end of SFY20.
- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance including Skill-to-Work programs, pre-screening applicants, offering rooms for job fairs and interviewing, and consultant services, which are Agency specific such as ADA Training and disability etiquette training for existing employees.
- Expand workforce services for individuals at all levels and skill of experience.
- Train one-stop staff on the basic eligibility requirements for DVR throughout the state.
- Utilize the integrated nature of one-stop centers to increase customer participation and engage, support local businesses, and strengthen partnerships.
- Continue to work with local one-stop centers to obtain physical and programmatic accessibility assessments to ensure each center is meeting modern accessibility standards to individuals of all skills levels and abilities as required in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Work collaboratively with State and Local Workforce Development Boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions. DVR has Agency representatives on each of the four Workforce Development Boards.

Goals for continued Service to Students and Youth with Disabilities and Supported Employment:

New Mexico Division Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memoranda of Agreement (MOU) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), New Mexico Public Education (PED), and Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) agencies. These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating transition services for Transition individuals and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services across the state.

DVR continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Project Search and Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, Local Educational agencies (LEA). VR continues to collaborate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.

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

See following Sections.

A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates; (General) DVR along with SRC plan to conduct a new triennial comprehensive assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant disabilities who reside in the State. In 2019 at the direction of DVR/SRC, MA Strategies provided a comprehensive plan to conduct two (2) satisfaction surveys covering the entire state of New Mexico. The first survey solicited responses from current and former New Mexico Division of Vocations Rehabilitation (DVR) clients; the second survey solicited responses from transition students, currently receiving transition services from DVR. Two surveys were deployed through methods approved by the New Mexico State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), to at least 10% of DVR consumers, producing at least a 25% response rate. Each survey consisted of 15-25 questions, provided by the SRC. Surveys were conducted via the internet and in hardcopy format. Survey questions were provided by SRC, with each survey consisting of three parts: Part 1 assessed the services they have received related to planning for success in reaching your employment goals; Part 2 assessed the quality of services provided to individuals with disabilities statewide (general) and who are transitioning into a successful adult life (transition); Part 3 assessed the degree to which rights and responsibilities were explained to clients by their DVR Counselor.

Observations discovered were that DVR provides highly valued services to a broad spectrum of both General and Transition clients, who often report these services as life changing. Satisfaction levels for DVR were high (ranging from 82% Strongly Agree/Agree to 55% Strongly Agree/Agree in the lowest rated category). Areas of strength include professionalism and respect, clear explanations of processes, responsibilities and answers to questions. Areas of concern include staff turnover, timeliness of responses and difficulties in helping clients secure employment. Recommendations included: more extensive preparation of DVR counselors to understand a wider variety of employment options tailored to the needs of specific populations who've reported difficulty in finding good fits with employers. Deeper links with employers in order to understand their needs, particularly around employability skills and skills-based hiring. More effective use of technology in reaching out and maintaining contact with clients (Universal Design for Learning, mobile and online access to current information). Better coordination with schools (K12 and Higher Education) to ensure that policies and practices address barriers cited in comments. Better integration with Career/Technical Education programs and partnerships with local employers and economic developers, as appropriate to DVR client skillsets. Effective strategies for engaging clients periodically in order to keep contact information accurate and current. Explore entrepreneurship for DVR clients to take advantage of emerging "new economy" opportunities.

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

State performance now align with the new Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. These measures include: Employment in the 2nd quarter, Employment in the 4th quarter, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, Measurable Skills Gains, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers. The Division plans to develop and collect these measures during the Performance Years of 2018 and 2019 to develop baseline measures for future expected levels of performance in these areas.

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)

DVR implemented a revised accounting process to ensure the recording of federal grant expenditures and associated state match expenditures, as well as program income and funds transfers from other agencies that also are used as match, in the state SHARE accounting system.

***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)

Description of Priority categories

It is the policy of DVR to provide vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals under an order of selection. Under the order of selection, the Division has established three priority groups. Every individual determined to be eligible for services is placed in the appropriate priority group based upon the documentation used to determine eligibility and/or vocational rehabilitation needs. Selection and placement in a priority group is based solely upon the significance of the eligible individual's disability, and is not based upon the type of disability, geographical area in which the individual lives, projected type of vocational outcome, age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, or national origin of the individual.

The priority groups are:

(1) Priority Group 1. Eligible individuals with a most significant disability are persons:

a. Who have a severe physical or mental impairment which seriously impedes the individuals functional capacities in three or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, cognitive abilities, or work tolerance or attendant

factors) in terms of an employment outcome; and b. whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple and intensive vocational rehabilitation services in order to result in an employment outcome.

(2) Priority Group 2. Eligible individuals with a significant disability are persons: a. who have a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, cognitive abilities, or work tolerance or attendant factors) in terms of an employment outcome; and b. for whom vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

(3) Priority Group 3. Other Eligible individuals are persons with a disability who meet eligibility criteria, but do not meet the definition of a significant or most significant disability.

B. The justification for the order. (General)

Budget reductions experienced during fiscal years 2018–2019 had resulted in limited financial and personnel resources. Analysis of available resources resulted in a projection that by August 2018, DVR lacked sufficient resources to provide services to all eligible individuals. The Division, in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, determined the necessity of implementation of an order of selection at this time ensured service delivery to eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities not be interrupted. However, individuals with significant disabilities and individuals with a disability were put on delay status at this time.

DVR currently has addressed its vacancies rates from a high of 50% to 40% in SFY19 through several rapid hire events which have been successful. The current vacancy rate is at 25%.

C. The service and outcome goals. (General)

Priority Category 1 Number of individuals to be served: 4,425 Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services: 342 Number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services: 159 Cost of services: \$3,420,000 (Title I funds), \$122,250 (Title VI B funds)

Priority Category 2 Number of individuals to be served: 4924 Estimated Number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services: 426 Estimated Number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services: 3291 Cost of services: \$4,860,000

Priority Category 3 Number of Individuals to be served: 209 Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services: 21 Estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services: 10 Cost of services: \$ 720,000

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

Time within which goals are to be achieved (all priority categories): 10/01/2020 – 09/30/2021

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

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order DVR shall continue to plan for and provide services to all participants being served under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) prior to, and at the time of, implementation of the order of selection irrespective of the severity of the participant's disability. Participants that have been moved off the waiting list and who are receiving services will also continue to do so regardless of whether their priority group is closed. Participants shall be placed in priority categories at the time of eligibility determination.

Depending upon Division resources, the categories shall be closed for services in ascending order beginning with Category 3 and proceeding to Categories 2 and 1. Services shall be provided only to those individuals in an open category. Individuals with the most significant disabilities (priority category 1) will be selected for services before all others.

DVR will inform each participant on their caseloads:

(1) Of the priority groups in the order of selection; (2) If eligible, of the individual's assignment to a priority group; (3) Of the individual's right to appeal that assignment; (4) If eligible and in a priority group not being served, that they can remain on a waiting list until such time that the priority group is served; and (5) Of information and referral services available to all applicants.

Cases in eligible status within a closed priority group will be placed in delayed status and remain on a waiting list until such time as resources allow for the release of cases to be served. No IPE will be written for cases on the waiting list. Staff will continue to take applications, diagnose and evaluate all applicants to determine eligibility and assign a priority group. If an eligible participant is placed in a closed priority group, the case will go on the waiting list and no IPE will be written.

When analysis of resources indicates the ability to open a priority group, the staff will receive notice along with a list of participants on their caseload who can be removed from delayed status. Eligible participants will be released from delayed status based on priority assignment and their application date, releasing those with the earliest application date. Staff will contact identified participants to develop and implement their Individualized Plan for Employment. Any participant with an IPE that existed prior to the date order of selection was implemented, irrespective of their priority group, will continue to receive services as planned. Such an IPE may be amended if the changes are necessary for the individual to continue progress toward achieving an appropriate employment outcome or are other Wise necessary within policy.

Persons requiring post–employment services will also be provided the necessary services regardless of priority group assignment.

Information and referral services will remain available to eligible participants who are not in an open priority group. These participants will be given information and guidance, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and will be appropriately referred to Federal and State programs (other than the vocational rehabilitation program) including other components of the statewide workforce investment system. No IPE will be written to provide such services to these individuals.

As of 8/2018 only category Priority 1 – Most Significantly Disabled remained open, however DVR went into an active Order of Selection with Priority 2- Significantly Disabled and Priority 3 – All Others Eligible being closed. As of 9/2019 DVR started to release Priority 2 – Significantly Disabled participants off the wait list every other month in SFY 2020 in the amounts of 100-200 participants.

An on–going assessment of expenditures, expenditure projections for new (not yet written) Individualized Plans for Employment, Pre-ETS set aside requirements, budget changes and staff vacancies continue to be used to determine the need to close one or more priority categories.

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)

DVR has not elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of the established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment.

The 2014 amendment to the Rehabilitation Act under WIOA includes a 15% set–aside of federal match for Pre– employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities. Since students who are potentially eligible for VR services may receive Pre-ETS, students who are not yet eligible for DVR services would continue to receive the five core services (job exploration counseling, work–based learning experiences, counseling regarding post– secondary opportunities, workplace readiness training and self–advocacy training). Students found eligible, but not in “Service” status under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP), would be placed on a wait list for services if a list for their priority group had to be implemented. DVR initiated a wait list in 8/2018 due to funding changes, staff vacancies, and referral rates.

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)

Continue to provide Title VI–B services to clients in active status in pursuit of goals established in Individualized Plans for Employment. Approximately 350 clients will be provided Title VI–B services during the 2020 Federal Fiscal Year. This will include an emphasis on services to youth with most significant disabilities as directed in the 2014 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act.

Strategies to enhance and increase Title VI–B services:

- Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee–for–services basis developed statewide through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.
- Continue to seek long–term funding support from agencies providing supported employment. The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.
- The Division continues to work with other state agencies under memoranda of understanding focusing on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities under supported employment plans.
- Individual placements in integrated work settings at wages comparable to non–disabled peers performing similar work continue to be emphasized.
- The Division has increased its collaboration through participation with provider agencies; as well as independent and statewide entities to promote “Employment First” principles for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment. Since this collaboration 154 field staff have been trained in the Discovery process for non– traditional career development. Discovery is a customized employment process that gathers information through activities of daily living that can be translated into possibilities for meaningful and purposeful job placement. The goal of this activity is successful employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible for Supported Employment.
- The Division has established statewide liaisons in supported employment to assist the statewide Supported Employment Coordinator in technical assistance and conducting staff training relevant to supported employment policy and service provision. Division liaisons are active participants and attendees in supported employment trainings provided by experts at the local, regional, and national level. Division liaisons participate regularly in regional quarterly meetings held between collaborating agencies and the Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health.
- The Division has a position which provides information and will offer technical support to staff, service providers and other stakeholders on supported employment services

and fee structure. This position will compile information and data to track Supported Employment activities.

- The Division continues to support and promote strategies to assure employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.
- DVR has an Intergovernmental Agreement with UNM Center for Development and Disability to continue training programs under Project Search. This intensive career training program includes multiple youth with most significant disabilities. This effort is in keeping with the emphasis on serving this population via Title VI funds with the 50% set aside established under WIOA.

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)

Extended services are provided after DVR case closure and are primarily provided by DD Waiver funding allocated through DOH/DDSD. These funds are intended to provide long term services and support and may include additional employment needs such as long-term job coaching, on-site advocacy and job advancement and job retention opportunities as needed for the lifetime of the job. Additional resources for long term services and supports may also be provided through natural supports such as family, friends, employers and other community contacts. It is noted that time limits are not defined in the Division's Manual of Operational Procedures; rather, each case is assessed in terms of individual needs for supported employment services.

Youth Development Incorporative (YDI) and the Office of the State of New Mexico, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), are establishing a collaborative partnership to facilitate the transition of youth (ages 14 to 22) from YDI Educational programs to the achievement of their desired post-school outcomes, with a focus on employment; post-secondary education; training and lifelong learning; community participation; and healthy lifestyles; as well as facilitating provision of transition services to all participants who attend YDI programs.

DVR plans to utilize the 50% of Supported Employment funds set aside for youth with most significant disabilities to provide extended services, for up to four years, under the Partners for Employment and Project Search programs described in previous sections as well as extended services related to the partnership with YDI.

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)

DVR works with local education agencies to provide Students with most significant disabilities access to PreETS. DVR has developed intergovernmental agreements with the Centers for

Developmental Disabilities to implement Partners for Employment initiatives and project search. DVR works with long term providers who provide long term job supports to build capacity and training to ensure youth are provided access to participate in services successfully. NM DVR and DDS have established support to long-term providers. These agencies have included; Best Buddies, Adelante, TAOS, Nezy Care, PMS Shield, Los Cumbres, and Community Options.

The Division works collaboratively with Youth Development Incorporated (YDI) in establishing a collaborative partnership to facilitate the transition of youth (ages 14 to 22) from YDI Educational programs to the achievement of their desired post-school outcomes, with a focus on employment; post-secondary education; training and lifelong learning; community participation; and healthy lifestyles; as well as facilitating provision of transition services to all participants who attend YDI programs.

DVR has established a pilot internship program through the IGA with Center for Development and Disability to collaborate with Partners for Employment to focus on youth opportunities to provide work-based learning experience and potential job placement. The pilot has produced several successful experiences. DVR will look to expand this effort in the future.

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)

New Mexico Division Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memoranda of Agreement (MOU) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDS), Center for Development and Disability (CDD), New Mexico Public Education (PED), and Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) agencies. These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating transition services for Transition individuals and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services across the state.

DVR continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Project Search and Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, Local Educational agencies (LEA).

VR continues to collaborate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.

DVR public website provides an online referral. This allows interested participants to the program to enter a referral 24/7. These referrals are directed to the local office that serves the individual based on their provided address. This online referral process allows for immediacy of outreach from local area offices to ensure referral is processed timely, orientations, and appointments scheduled promptly.

The Division has added DocuSign as an electronic signature option for participants to use to address participant barriers which avoids participants having to visit DVR office's in-person to sign DVR documents. This is especially helpful for participants who live in rural areas who may have to travel a great distance to sign a plan.

DVR has implemented SharePoint program in efforts to improve communication and remain connected with staff. Staff will have immediacy in accessing agency documents, policies, and resources to best service participants consistently throughout the state.

DVR is considering an IGA with Developmental Disabilities Services Division in SFY19 to utilize the Title VI Youth SE funds of \$122,250 to provide long term supports for employed SE youth not on the New Mexico Medicaid waiver. These funds can be utilized up to 4 years to provide on the job long term supports to SE youth as a stop gap for those waiting on the NM Waiver, which currently has an estimated wait time of 8 to 10 years. NM is considering, where appropriate, to utilize these funds to provide up to 2 years of on the job supports for Project Search graduates with a job.

DVR, in collaboration with the Self-Employment Task Force at Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Office and RTC: Rural to help people with disabilities understand the self-employment process. The website provides a way for participants' and counselors to work from the same material while assessing self-employment readiness and developing a business plan. The website is self-directed and can be used by individuals on their own or with the guidance of a vocational rehabilitation counselor or business development mentor. DVR is planning on serving as a study site for the self-employment process. A VR Self-Employment guide (www.vrselfemployment.org) has been developed and is of great value for self-employment business plans. Self-employment has been an underutilized employment option. The goal is to increase the VR counselor's preparedness to guide participants through the process. This guide is self-paced for participants and counselors to work through the self-employment process. The guide offers an online curriculum both as a training tool for counselors and participants. DVR will identify VR counselors to participate in a training event that will orient them about the VR Self-Employment Guide. As envisioned, the website can serve both as a training platform for counselors and a tool and process that counselors and participants can use together during the self-employment exploration and development process. DVR's participation in this effort reflects our interest in expanding self-employment outcomes in New Mexico DVR and the ongoing need for targeted counselor and participant materials.

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)

Technology has become one of the primary engines for economic activity, education, and innovation in the Nation, and throughout the world. The commitment of the United States to the development and utilization of technology is one of the main factors underlying the strength and vibrancy of the economy of the United States.

The New Mexico Technology Assistance Program (NMTAP), a program under the Governor's Commission on Disability (GCD), provides information and access to Assistive Technology (AT) for individuals with disabilities statewide. Operating under the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Community Living, NMTAP fulfills the requirements of the AT Act of 2004. Services are delivered through the main location in the greater Albuquerque area and two satellite offices, located in the northeast and southwest areas of NM. NMTAP has contracts with both the Northeastern Regional Educational Cooperative to provide services out of New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM, and with Western New Mexico University to provide services in Silver City, NM; contracts cover the surrounding areas in both regions. All three locations provide adequate support to students in secondary schools and their individual transition plans required by WIOA.

The four core services required under that mandate of the AT Act of 2001 include device demonstration, device loans, financial loans and reutilized equipment. Device demonstration provides a comparison of several devices that ease a particular challenge for an individual with a disability, such as visual or cognitive impairment. This allows the individual to make a decision on which device might best serve their needs.

Frequently device demonstrations will result in a device loan, during which a DVR participant will borrow the AT device to try it out for 30 days in their own environment. This allows the individual and their VR Counselor to assess if the device will in fact provide access to either employment or education that leads to employment.

The financial loan component of NMTAP provides low interest loans to individuals with disabilities statewide when there are no other options or to offset DVR funds available. The San Juan Center for Independence contracts with NMTAP to provide the two different loans. The Self Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities (SEED) Loans can help fund equipment for entrepreneurs with disabilities by providing a low-interest loan. SEED Loans can help supplement a DVR participant's plans for a home-based business. Access Loans NM is the second financial loan offered and it provides low-interest loans for AT needed when all other options have been exhausted. Access Loans are often used for accessible transportation or modifications for entering and exiting one's home.

The final core component provides used durable medical equipment and refurbished computers to persons with disabilities. NMTAP contracts with two of Adelante Development Center's programs for this service - DiverseIT and Back In Use. DVR participants can receive a refurbished computer at no cost to be used for their education or employment through the DiverseIT program. The Back In Use program offers used durable medical equipment for DVR participants and other individuals with disabilities who need it.

NMTAP also provides training statewide for professionals working with individuals with disabilities and works with DVR frequently to educate VR counselors about AT devices and services. Over the last three years, NMTAP has provided training for VR Counselors statewide at the annual NMTAP-sponsored AT Conferences and at NMTAP's the smaller one-day workshops in rural areas, called Hands-On Workshops of AT (HOW-AT's). NMTAP also provided hands-on training at DVR-sponsored Statewide Training. In addition, NMTAP can provide technical assistance to DVR, such as ensuring their offices are accessible as required by federal law as requested.

DVR and NMTAP initiated a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017 and will be implementing an Intergovernmental Agreement in 2018. According to the agreement, AT Specialists with NMTAP will now be able to offer official AT evaluations conducted by a Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) certified Assistive Technology Professionals (ATP). These evaluations will help DVR participants with more complex considerations to achieve employment and strengthen the partnership between NMTAP and DVR.

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)

Benefits advisement services are provided to enhance participation in VR by Social Security disability beneficiaries who tend to be underserved. Services aid to address concerns about the effect of employment on benefits as well as provide information regarding incentives and benefits of employment.

In addition, DVR maintains a strong relationship with University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM CDD). DVR staff have developed short training videos on different working issues and have teamed with UNM CDD units to provide statewide trainings. The Benefits Advisor Services Supervisor has also volunteered to mentor the CDDs designated Community Partners Work Incentives Counselor and has provided SSA approved presentation so the CDD may do outreach.

The Division is involved in a Vocational Technical Assistance Center project targeted at five economically disadvantaged communities (mostly Hispanic and Native American) in

Albuquerque (87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121) to address barriers to employment regarding individuals with Mental Health Conditions and /or Persons with Substance Abuse Disorders. This project is a collaboration between the Division, Rehabilitation Service Administration, U.S. Department of Education, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA, and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. The goal is to expand VR services to this target population and expand and strengthen partnerships with local social service and community development agencies, correctional agencies, community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), school systems, employers, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders. This project will involve the Division in development of knowledge (training) in working with this target population and will design strategies to provide technical assistance and coordination of activities to maximize community service and alliance building. In 2019 this project developed an Integrated Resource Team pilot to serve participants in which the Division will collaborate regarding resources with Title I and Title III partners in conjunction with various community partners involved in mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, and probation/parole. This project also spawned a job club in the Albuquerque Metro Area for these targeted communities through Hope Works.

This project has the support of twenty local partnerships to implement comprehensive support services to address barriers in employment to this target population.

The Division continues to explore ways to improve services to Native American populations as well as increasing staff competencies with respect to cultural differences. Division resources will determine priority and further development of these broad general goals of Career Development, Successful Employment Outcomes, and DVR–SRC Collaboration. In addition, DVR will continue to include a component of tribal diversity and sensitivity training in its' Rehabilitation Academy which is utilized to train staff.

To this end, DVR has updated Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with two of the 121 programs in the state. These agreements facilitate communication between DVR and the 121 programs in service provision to participants being served by both a 121 program and DVR.

DVR also assigns specific staff to tribes throughout the state. This is designed to maximize service provision, coordination and on-going relationships by itinerate VR staff being available on-site.

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DVR also assigns specific staff to tribes throughout the state. This is designed to maximize service provision, coordination and on-going relationships by itinerate VR staff being available on-site.

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 been collaborating with other NM state agency partners in supporting and funding “Partners for Employment”. This innovative state-wide contract brings together a variety of both in-state and out of state vocational experts to develop and implement the Discovery process for individuals with the most significant disabling conditions. This process, as well as other non-traditional career development paths, is intended to support and encourage vocational strategies which result in successful employment outcomes for participants. The majority of individuals served as a result of this collaboration are receiving direct training and support by nationally known experts employed by Marc Gold and Associates. In the last several months, DVR has participated in and been intimately involved in agency training provided by Marc Gold and Associates. In turn, DVR counselors are working directly with employment teams who have made the commitment to support DVR participants toward meeting their specific vocational objectives.

Reserved Title I funds have traditionally been used to support innovation and expansion operations and activities of both the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council. This support continues.

The Division continues to collaborate with the Governor’s Commission on Disability on two initiatives: 1) increase direct services and support personnel services to deaf – blind individuals through existing community providers and 2) Transfer of the New Mexico Technology Assistance Program from the Division to the Governor’s Commission. This has now been completed and the program continues to be available for DVR participants.

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

The agency Supported Employment Coordinator continues to act as a resource for community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) and vocational rehabilitation staff. While the agency maintains a memorandum of Understanding with the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, efforts will be made to identify additional service providers and to maintain or improve relationships with existing CRPs.

The Division is involved in a Vocational Technical Assistance Center project targeted at five economically disadvantaged communities (mostly Hispanic and Native American) in Albuquerque (87102, 87105, 87106, 87108 and 87121) to address barriers to employment regarding individuals with Mental Health Conditions and /or Persons with Substance Abuse Disorders. This project is a collaboration between the Division, Rehabilitation Service Administration, U.S. Department of Education, Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA, and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. The goal is to expand VR services to this target population and expand and strengthen partnerships with local social service and community development agencies, correctional agencies, community rehabilitation programs (CRPs), school systems, employers, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders. This project will involve the Division in development of knowledge (training) in working with this target population and will design strategies to provide technical assistance and coordination of activities to maximize community service and alliance building. In 2019 this project developed an Integrated Resource Team pilot to serve participants in which the Division collaborated regarding resources with Title I and Title III partners in conjunction with various community partners involved in mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, and probation/parole. This project also spawned a job club in the Albuquerque Metro Area for these targeted communities through Hope Works.

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. since 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers on at least a yearly basis with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 239 disabled subminimum wage employees were served in 2019. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 WIOA.

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

State Goals and Priorities will now need to align with the new Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. These measures include: Employment in the 2nd quarter, Employment in the 4th quarter, Median Earnings, Credential Attainment, Measurable Skills Gains, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers. The Division plans to train staff

to correctly enter data essential for these performance measures during the Performance Years of 2019 and 2020 to develop baseline measures for future expected levels of performance.

Elements of the Division's Performance Improvement Plan includes: 1. Develop innovative strategies to increase program outcomes in difficult economic times. 2. Develop effective partnerships with participants, employers, vendors and others as appropriate, to improve participants' outcomes and therefore program outcomes. 3. Effectively and efficiently monitor and manage activities and expenditures for all programs for optimal performance. 4. Obtain necessary state match to capture all federal rehabilitation dollars available to NM. 5. Effectively manage an Order of Selection for participant services (priority of service) due to funding cuts. 6. Implement innovative technology alternatives to improve communication and performance. 7. Prepare for retirement or loss of key staff (Recruitment and Retention).

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

DVR continues to be actively involved as a Workforce Development partner in New Mexico. A representative from DVR attends meetings with other Workforce Development partners. DVR has strategized components which will aide other statewide workforce development systems in assisting individuals with disabilities.

Over the past year The Agency has been engaged with developing and evaluating the success of strategic workforce planning and developing relationships between DVR and other workforce entities in example: Wagner-Pyser, WIOA, YDI, Apprenticeships, and TAA. DVR will strive to maintain this high level of cooperation and participation.

Current strategies which complement existing initiatives or programs and supports expansion of successful employment-based strategies:

- Continue established partnerships to promote Education, Training and Career events on a quarterly or more frequent basis, begin to include other partners to the events by provide collaboration across partner organizations to increase participation of youths with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment opportunities.
- Promotional activities geared towards the DVR service of ADA consultation, which can be utilized by other components/agencies in the statewide workforce development system. Three DVR Program Managers are completing the ADA training to obtain certification. The goal is for additional staff to attend the ADA training every year and obtain certification to provide ADA consultation to staff and employers.
- DVR will continue to work towards strengthening relationship between OFFCP and DVR.
- DVR will offer training to other agencies regarding DVR services, processes and requirements.

- DVR will strive towards improvements in communication and coordination of services around individual job seekers to better leverage resources available through multiple systems utilizing a referral process.
- DVR will continue to work with staff for their better understanding of Labor Market strategies.
- DVR will make strides towards providing employment experiences or On the Job training activities in the community. Through this strategy, mutual customers can provide experience that may lead to permanent employment.
- DVR will continue expand engagement of the business sector as a partner in developing career pathways for youth with disabilities in high-growth industries.
 - DVR will pilot an Integrated Resource Team with Title I and Title iii partners

In 2017, the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) opened a satellite office within the Bernalillo County Workforce Connection Center. The purpose of this DVR office is to help individuals with disabilities find employment. This office will consist of two Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, and a Vocational Rehabilitation Technician. This unit will also be supported by the DVR Business Specialist. The goal of this co-location will be to allow individuals with disabilities to be jointly served between the various workforce partners and DVR. DVR can provide technical assistance to both workforce partners and Job Seekers with disabilities on issues regarding disabilities. WCCNM, workforce partners and DVR staff will be cross-trained on each other's programs which will lead to cross-referrals. A process for collaborative case management will also be developed. DVR staff will attend the bi-monthly Business Team Meetings with other workforce partners. This partnership will lead to knowledge about assessment tools, employment leads, job fairs, and hiring events being shared by all the partners within the Central Region Workforce area. It will also increase collaboration for on-the-job training (OJT) experiences for disabled job seekers. The DVR staff assigned to the Bernalillo County Workforce Connection office will then notify other Central Region DVR offices about these opportunities available through WCCNM. DVR is an active partner with the Career, Training, and Education Committee (CTE) and the Coalition Advocating Development Employment Training Services Committee (CADETS) in developing job fairs, hiring events, OJT training programs, and certificate programs. DVR plans to co-locate in Farmington and Santa Fe by 2021.

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)

The primary strategy to achieve agency's goals and priorities continues to be filling vacant vocational rehabilitation counselor positions and reducing turnover. A statewide hiring freeze in recent years lead to delays in filling vacant positions. Positions are now being advertised and positions continue to be filled.

With the implementation of WIOA in July 2015 DVR will now be required by law to significantly add to the demographics of clients that are served in all DVR offices. Each local office of DVR now must: (1) attend IEP meetings for students with disabilities when invited, (2) work with local workforce development boards, One-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, (3) work with schools, to coordinate and guarantee the provisions of pre-employment transition services, (4) attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Title 19 of the Social Security Act, when invited (WIOA 422). DVR is also now required to increase spending to at least 15% of section 110 state allotments for provision of pre-employment transition services, which for DVR is \$3.2 million per year, which cannot be used to pay administrative costs of providing pre-employment services (WIOA 419). To accomplish the new requirements under WIOA, DVR must expand its current workforce.

DVR's goal is to increase the number of positions to ensure DVR has 21 Transition Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, conducting 100% PreETS

ts. This will allow DVR to continue to provide service to all school districts by conducting Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities ages 14-21. DVR plans to add two additional positions for Transition Coordinators, as well as one Transition Manager. This proposed plan to add additional FTE positions will be in the next four years. The additional transition counselors are required to assist in providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to meet the WIOA mandate of \$3.2 million. The two transition coordinators are needed to fulfill the requirement of WIOA for the Southern and Northern sections of the state. DVR was successful at obtaining 10 FTE in SFY 19. These positions are Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor-Supervisors and focus on Pre-Employment Transition Services and Supported Employment services. -These positions are to carry a caseload of 50 to 65 participants. The goal is to increase the division's ability to serve additional participants by 500 to 600 individuals with disabilities and will create a stronger service pathway for PRE-ET's students referred to Title I services. DVR plans to increase nine Employment Specialist FTE positions to assist in supported employment and with general VR participants with skills training, job development and job placement.

Justification for the additional FTE's are as follows: • General Caseload's demographics have increasing number of mental health disabilities that significantly impact the severity of disabilities served and prolonging DVR services for participants. • The requested Transition Counselor positions.

Expanding the number qualified personnel providing direct participant service will do much to address suggestions made as a result of the latest update to the needs assessment. The

identified needs of improved customer service and increased access by participants to training programs would both be addressed by increased staff available to serve participants and increased staff time/expertise available to identify, develop and procure specialized training programs.

In addition to expanding the number of personnel, DVR is planning customer service trainings to enhance quality and consistency of service. The agency is also providing specific Supported Employment training to current field staff. This will serve to increase staff expertise in identifying customized employment and individualized training strategies for participants.

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

One Stop Colocations

DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop's daily operations. DVR plans to co-locate in the Farmington and Santa Fe one-stop offices by the end of SFY 2021.

CADETS

DVR is also currently, and very actively, involved in the CADETS program. CADETS is a conglomeration of state and federal agencies which have come together to provide a comprehensive team of service providers for individual populations which are considered "at risk." These populations include justice involved citizens, individuals with disabilities, individuals that have been on state benefits for a significant amount of time, etc. Some of the partners of CADETS include: local education agencies such as Central New Mexico Community College and the University of New Mexico, DVR, Fathers Building Futures (a non-profit dedicated to helping justice involved citizens with re-entry), NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, local employers, ACLU, Roadrunner Foodbank which serves as both an employer and an on-the-job training provider and others. CADETS was just recently able to extend an arm out to State Probation and add them as a partner to the collaborative.

Transition Accomplishments and Innovative Practices under WIOA

Currently the Division is establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving local Regional Educational memberships, states, local educational agencies, designated state units, developmental disabilities agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goal of this section; and disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally un-served populations.

New Mexico Division Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has implemented several intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) and/or Memoranda of Agreement (MOU) in cooperation with other state agencies including the Department of Health (DOH), Developmental Disabilities

Support Division (DDSD), Center for Development and Disabilities (CDD), New Mexico Public Education (PED), and Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC) agencies. These cooperative agreements aid in facilitating transition services for Transition individuals and youth who are eligible for Supported Employment services across the state.

DVR continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Project Search and Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, Local Educational agencies (LEA). VR continues to collaborate with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.

Regional Education Cooperatives

The DVR works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition services and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS). Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to state public/charter high schools throughout the state and are working in collaboration with CREC Vocational Transition Specialist (VTS) to provide (PRE-ETS) services. DVR counselors continue to attend Individualized Education Plans (IEP's) and are working collaboratively with CREC VTS to attend IEP's. VTS and DVR staff are providing PRE-ETS services throughout the state. These services include Guidance to employment, Self-Advocacy, Work Readiness, and Guidance to Post-Secondary education and Work Experience. VTS have referred 151 students as potential DVR participants to DVR offices across the state.

Section 511

DVR is promoting Section 511 of WIOA, which limits the use of subminimum wage for employers that hold FLSA 14c certificates. The intention of Section 511 of WIOA is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive employment. Since 2017 DVR arranged and met with three employers on at least a yearly basis with 14c certificates and their disabled subminimum wage employees at five work sites throughout the state. DVR collaborated with Adelante in two sites in Albuquerque (the Document Shredding Center and the Fulfillment Center) and their site in Los Lunas (Bargain Square). In addition, DVR collaborated with CARC in Carlsbad and Zee Empowerment in Gallup. A mobile team of DVR vocational rehabilitation counselors met with disabled subminimum wage employees at each site and provided vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services to promote employment in competitive employment in integrated settings. A total of 239 disabled subminimum wage employees were served in 2019, in which 54 of them were referred to DVR, and 7 obtained employment via DVR assistance. DVR will continue to provide disabled subminimum wage employees with

vocational guidance and counseling and information and referral services at these sites a minimum of once a year and twice a year for those hired after July 22, 2016 as per compliance with Section 511 of WIOA.

ACRE Certifications

DVR sponsored ACRE training for community partners:

- In collaboration with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Partners for Employment is offering a limited number of scholarships for private job developers to take the ACRE-certified Supported Employment Online Course offered by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The online course will start October 30, 2017 and runs through January 15, 2018.
- The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) awards nationally recognized Certificates of Achievement to providers of employment services to people with disabilities. This Certificate documents that the provider has satisfactorily completed a minimum of 40 hours of training or professional development provided by an ACRE-approved training resource. Virginia Commonwealth University is a member of ACRE, and the Supported Employment Online Certificate Series online course is a recognized training program.

DVR Employee Supported Employment Training and ACRE Certification:

- 154 DVR employees have completed the VCU online Support Employment Training
- 42 individuals have gone on to earn ACRE certification

Project E3: Educate, Empower and Employ

Provide technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of Individuals with disabilities. The TA will be provided on-site through long term service delivery relationships with local VR agency personnel and community-based partners to high-leverage groups with national applicability in economically disadvantaged communities (targeted communities) Identified by the VR agencies themselves.

Project E3 provides technical assistance (TA) to State VR agencies and their partners to address barriers to VR participation and competitive integrated employment of historically underserved groups of individuals with disabilities who are economically disadvantaged. This RSA/Southern U. of Baton Rouge project concentrates on five specific zip codes in Albuquerque: 87102, 87105, 87106, 87108, and 87121. This project will focus on ways to breakdown employment barriers for people w/ Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders in these zip codes. In 2019 this project developed an Integrated Resource Team pilot to serve participants in which the Division collaborated regarding resources with Title I and Title III partners in conjunction with various community partners involved in mental health, substance abuse, homelessness,

and probation/parole. This project also spawned a job club in the Albuquerque Metro Area for these targeted communities through Hope Works

Expedited Eligibility

The Division implemented a Same Day Eligibility as a business process in 2018 to expedite eligibility determination for participants. Expedited eligibility is same day eligibility for interested individuals requesting vocational rehabilitation services. This innovative model will be utilized to begin providing vocational guidance and counseling services for eligible participants at the onset of eligibility determination. In addition, the process will decrease the days in application status and promote quality customer service. Qualitative and quantitative measuring outcomes will be an ongoing process in developing a working sustainable model of Same-Day Eligibility. This involves participant surveys and vocational rehabilitation counselor surveys and feedback. When the agency is no longer on an active order-of selection this business practice will once again commence.

Self-Employment

A VR Self-Employment guide (www.vrselfemployment.org) has been developed and is of great value for self-employment business plans. This website is used as a tool to prepare the VR Counselor and participants for development of a self-employment business plan. The website is available as a training platform for counselors and a tool and process that counselors and participants can use together during the self-employment exploration and development process.

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)

Strategies to address barriers to equitable access of and participation in state Vocational Rehabilitation Services include:

- Increased use of on-site sign language interpreters where limited number of licensed and registered sign language interpreters are available and decrease use of Video Relay Interpreter services. Deaf and Hard of Hearing have indicated an increased preference to on-site sign language interpreters to the Video Relay Interpreter until the technology for the VRI can be improved or another viable Video Relay can be determined.
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing individuals that have an income below \$50,000, can apply for technical equipment through the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of hearing which includes a free iPad that will access the Video Phone through the internet to communicate with the general public through a sign interpreter.

- Collaboration with Behavioral Health Services. DVR continues work toward intra-agency collaboration dealing with behavioral health services among all agency/divisions in the New Mexico Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative (BHPC).
- Collaborative partnerships with statewide community service providers.
- Filling vacant rehabilitation counselor positions and reducing turnover.
- Addressing the issues and interests of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system both in developing policy and influencing service delivery, through representation on State Workforce Boards.
- Strategies to address barriers to equitable access of and participation in state Supported Employment Services include: Continue to use Title VI–B funds for case services exclusively. Funds will be allocated to the Area Offices where the direct delivery of services takes place. These funds will be monitored quarterly and reallocated to the Area Offices based on need. Title I funds will also be used for supported employment services once Title VI–B funds are exhausted, or in the event that Title VI–B funds are rolled into Title I at the federal level.
- Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee–for–services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.
- Continue to seek long–term funding support from agencies providing supported employment.

The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment. DVR works diligently with collaborating partners to assure and provide services that will mitigate and/or prevent potential barriers to employment. Some of the activities that DVR participate include:

Active participation on a variety of committees and board memberships that reviews data with the focus on service outcomes with specific goals and objectives that are targeted throughout each fiscal year. As systemic issues are identified, collaboration with partnering agencies are developed to address identified barriers and concerns.

The Division does not target specific disability groups to provide supported employment services. However, long– term support funding by the State is currently available for those individuals who are either developmentally disabled or who have significant disabling mental illness.

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)

The Division continues to expand and improve services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, to individuals who are minorities, or individuals who have been unserved or under-served.

Client data is examined to determine increased utilization of services in specific areas. Additionally, testimony received in public hearings that supports this data is considered. The following data represents achieved goals as per the most recently completed program year.

State's Goals and Priorities for the State Fiscal Year 2017 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017):

Number of participants served (projected: 9,500) = 9,903

Number of persons achieving a viable employment outcome consistent with the client's skills, abilities, aptitudes, interests, and a minimum of 90 days (projected: 800) = 863

Number of participants with most significant/significant disabilities served (coded significant disability at eligibility) (projected: 6,840) = 9,124

Number of persons with significant disabilities achieving a viable outcome consistent with their skills, abilities, aptitudes, interests, and a minimum of 90 days (projected: 740) = 798

Number of individuals to be served with Title VI-B funds (projected: 420) = 160

Strategies that contributed to the achievement of goals and priorities are varied as indicated below: 1. Rehabilitation Academy is available to new and less experienced staff, and to more experienced staff as a refresher. 2. Field fiscal processes are being reviewed by Field Operation Specialists in most areas to maximize efficiency while maintaining compliance with all regulations and standards. 3. Case and caseload reviews are conducted by field program managers routinely utilizing standardized instruments and monthly data reports. 4. Coaching and mentoring are provided by field program managers and lead counselors in field program to promote quality service delivery, support and guidance, and consistent practice. 5. Memoranda of Understanding are developed jointly with the Public Education 6. Department, local school districts, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, the Behavioral Health Division, to promote collaboration and create systemic improvements. 7. Performance appraisal measures

have been standardized to enable cumulative performance aligned with agency goals. 8. Staff members are recognized annually to promote an additional incentive to exceed individual and agency goals. 9. Attainment of CSPD standards: newer counseling staff are required to become licensed. 10. Efforts are made to attract higher qualified staff. 11. Continued planning and efforts to reduced ratio of staff to Program Managers allowing more time to managers to focus on Area needs, promote staff development, services to clients, and continuous quality improvement. In State FY 2018, this included addition of two new regional areas and corresponding Program Manager positions to decrease staff-to-manager ratio. This also facilitates Program Managers being on-site in field offices in the two new regions. 12. Factoring in data from Participant Satisfaction and Statewide Needs Assessment recommendations for improved best practices.

Comprehensive strategic planning consists of seven major focus areas: 1. Budget Management – Effective Use of Resources 2. Career Development – Positive Organizational Climate 3. Innovative Technology Alternatives for Communication – Effective Use of Resources 4. Optimize funding for Core Program – Effective Use of Resources 5. Quality Participant Outcomes – Successful Participant Outcomes 6. State Rehabilitation Council and Stakeholder Satisfaction and Statewide Needs Assessment – Participant and Stakeholder Satisfaction 7. Streamlining Processes and Internal Controls – Participant and Stakeholder Satisfaction.

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

The agency continues to experience vocational rehabilitation counselor and staff turnover in recent years, this has created significant staffing challenges. Although vacancies are being filled, there are a number of less experienced counselors on a learning curve. The achieved employment outcome percentage is expected to improve as new counselors become increasing experienced. In addition, changes in the state personnel process may result in increased time to fill vacancies.

The number of participants served with Title VI-B funds was lower than anticipated due to the regulatory changes in when funds may be utilized. DVR is developing strategies to ensure use of all available Title VI-B funds in SFY 2019 and beyond.

Workforce Partners continue to develop data sharing processes since the release of the federal final regulations in 2016.

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)

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

- Continue to purchase supported employment services from programs on either a fee-for-services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through

specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, for clients with the most significant disabilities.

- Continue to seek long-term funding support from agencies providing supported employment. The Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health, provides long term funding for supported employment to provider agencies under the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and Mi Via Waivers. The Division works collaboratively with the Behavioral Health Services Division, Department of Health, New Mexico Department of Human Services, and the NM Behavioral Health Collaborative to assure ongoing support services for individuals with severe disabling mental illness served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.
- The Division continues to work with other state agencies under memoranda of understanding focusing on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities under supported employment plans.
- Individual placements in integrated work settings at wages comparable to non-disabled peers performing similar work continue to be emphasized.
- The Division has increased its collaboration through participation with provider agencies; as well as independent and statewide entities to promote “Employment First” principles for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.
- The Division has established statewide liaisons in supported employment to assist the statewide Supported Employment Coordinator in technical assistance and conducting staff training relevant to supported employment policy and service provision. Division liaisons are active participants and attendees in supported employment trainings provided by experts at the local, regional, and national level. Division liaisons participate regularly in regional quarterly meetings held between collaborating agencies and the Developmental Disabilities Support Division, Department of Health.
- The Division has a devoted staff person who provides guidance and technical assistance to staff, service providers, and other stakeholders. This individual also compiles information and data, and tracks Supported Employment activities.
- The Division continues to support and promote strategies to assure employment opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities served under supported employment Individualized Plans for Employment.
- The Division will continue to meet with WIOA section 511 Subminimum Wage individuals around the state, through a mobile unit, to provide Career Counseling and Information and Referral to each person and inquire if they are interested in integrated employment at minimum wage or better.

Strategies that contributed to achievement of goals included use Title VI-B funds for case services exclusively, purchase of supported employment services from programs on either a fee-for-services basis or through milestone payments developed regionally and/or through specific Memorandum of Understanding with other state agencies, long-term funding support

from agencies providing supported employment, and working with other state agencies under memoranda of understanding focusing on serving individuals with the most significant disabilities under supported employment plans.

Other strategies that continue to contribute to achievement of supported employment goals are the devoted SE Coordinator who provides technical support as well as intra and interagency coordination. The SE Coordinator, along with identified area Supported Employment Liaisons (one in each area), monitor SE referrals and follow up toward success in supported employment services.

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

State Goals and Priorities will align with the Federal Performance Accountability Measures of Section 116 of WIOA. DVR is coordinating with NM Workforce Solutions to obtain and review baseline measures for employment in the 2nd quarter, employment in the 4th quarter, median earnings, credential attainment, measurable skills gains, and effectiveness in serving employers. These measures will be utilized to develop performance indicators for State FY 2019 and beyond.

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

Reserved Title I funds are used to support innovation and expansion operations and activities of both the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council. This support will continue.

The Division continues to collaborate with the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Commission for the Blind to increase services to deaf – blind individuals through existing community providers.

Partners for Employment:

DVR has been collaborating with other NM state agency partners in supporting and funding “Partners for Employment”. This innovative statewide Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is intended to build capacity in Supported Employment service by providing training, technical assistance and opportunities for networking and collaboration. The program serves state agency personnel, supported employment service providers, educators, family members, self-advocates and employers to advance promising practices for inclusive employment throughout New Mexico. One achieved goal is development of a statewide systematic master training plan toward increasing knowledge and competence of employment professionals providing Supported Employment services in New Mexico.

One-Stop Partnership:

As a core partner for local one-stops throughout the state, DVR has achieved and will continue to achieve the following:

- DVR is currently co-located at the Albuquerque one-stop office and is fully integrated in the one-stop's daily operations.
- Enable businesses and employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other human resource assistance including Skill-to-Work programs, pre-screening applicants, offering rooms for job fairs and interviewing, and consultant services, which are Agency specific such as ADA Training and disability etiquette training for existing employees.
- Expand workforce services for individuals at all levels and skill of experience.
- Train one-stop staff on the basic eligibility requirements for DVR throughout the state.
- Utilize the integrated nature of one-stop centers to increase customer participation and engage, support local businesses, and strengthen partnerships.
- Continue to work with local one-stop centers to obtain physical and programmatic accessibility assessments to ensure each center is meeting modern accessibility standards to individuals of all skills levels and abilities as required in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act as well as Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Work collaboratively with State and Local Workforce Development Boards to establish and maintain the one-stop delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions. DVR has Agency representatives on each of the four Workforce Development Boards.

DVR Staff & Central Regional Educational Cooperative (CREC):

The DVR works with local education agencies throughout New Mexico to provide school-to-work transition services and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRE-ETS). Rehabilitation counselors are assigned to state public/charter high schools throughout the state and are working in collaboration with CREC Vocational Transition Specialist (VTS) to provide (PRE-ETS) services. DVR counselors continue to attend Individualized Education Plans (IEP's) and are working collaboratively with CREC VTS to attend IEP's. VTS and DVR staff are providing PRE-ETS services throughout the state. These services include Guidance to employment, Self-Advocacy, Work Readiness, and Guidance to Post-Secondary education and Work Experience. VTS have referred 151 students as potential DVR participants to DVR offices across the state.

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)

DVR is considering an IGA with Developmental Disabilities Services Division in SFY19 to utilize the Title VI Youth SE funds of \$122,250 toward providing long-term supports for employed SE youth not on the New Mexico Medicaid waiver. These funds may be utilized up to 4 years to provide on-the-job long-term supports to SE youth as a stop gap for those waiting on the NM Waiver, which currently has an estimated wait time of 8 to 10 years. NM is considering, where appropriate, to utilize these funds to provide up to 2 years of on the job supports for Project Search graduates with a job.

Intergovernmental agreements with the Center for Developmental Disabilities continue in support of Partners for Employment initiatives and Project Search.

Partners for Employment is identified as the statewide entity to oversee and manage a variety of Supported Employment Programs. This program is intended to provide expertise, training and support toward enhanced Supported Employment services. New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is working in collaboration with the founders of Project Search out of Cincinnati, Ohio to expand services statewide with a focus on rural areas throughout the state.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability (UNM/CDD), UNM Hospital, Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DOH/DDSD, Best Buddies, Adelante, Empowerment, Albuquerque Public Schools, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Gallup McKinley schools, Office of Special Education and Rehab Services (OSERS) and Project Search founders have given approval to replicate this program in New Mexico. Additional Project search sites are being developed and this program's expansion is expected to continue in State FY 2019.

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

DVR's policy is that all individuals who are eligible and receiving Supported Employment services must at a minimum require these services for a period of 6 months or longer. Transition to extended services is dependent upon individual participant need and stabilization in employment. Therefore, extended services will vary based upon client need.

Certifications (General)

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **New Mexico
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Name of designated State agency **New Mexico Public Education Department**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Diane Mourning Brown**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director of Vocational Rehabilitation**

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The **designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above** is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.** **Yes**
2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the **designated State agency listed above** agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; **Yes**
3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* , the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations , policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; ** **Yes**
4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; **Yes**
5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. **Yes**
6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. **Yes**
7. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; **Yes**
8. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services; **Yes**

9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. **Yes**

Footnotes (General)

Certification 1 Footnotes

* Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

*** Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in *** under Certification 2 footnotes

Additional Comments on the Certifications from the State (General)

Requested Revision(s)

The Vocational Rehabilitation Certifications portion of the VR Services portion of the Plan does not include all the required information required under sections 1 through 9.

Certification Regarding Lobbying — Vocational Rehabilitation (General)

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(General)

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(General)

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(General)

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance (General)

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the

required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Diana Mourning Brown**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director of Vocational Rehabilitation**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

Certification Regarding Lobbying — Supported Employment (General)

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(General)

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(General)

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(General)

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a

prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance (General)

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:
If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Diane Mourning Brown**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Director of Vocational Rehabilitation**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>).

Assurances (General)

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: (General)

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: (General)

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan: (General)

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

a. the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

b. the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

c. consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

d. the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3). (General)

e. the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

f. the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

g. state wideness and waivers of state wideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of state wideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **No**

h. the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

i. all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

j. the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

k. the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

l. the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities. (General)

m. the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: (General)

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

a. complies with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

b. imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

c. provides the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (General)

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **No**

d. determines whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

e. complies with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

f. complies with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

g. provides vocational rehabilitation services to Native Americans who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

h. comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

i. meets the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs (General)

j. with respect to students with disabilities, the State,

i. has developed and will implement,

A. strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and

B. strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and

ii. has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25)).

(General)

5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement: (General)

a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals

receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act. (General)

6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program: (General)

a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

7. Provision of Supported Employment Services: (General)

a. The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act. (General)

b. The designated State agency assures that:

- i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act
- ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(General)

Additional Comments on the Assurances from the State (General)

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is working in collaboration with the founders of Project Search out of Cincinnati, Ohio to expand services statewide with a focus on rural areas throughout the state. Project Search is in its fifth year of achieving successful employment outcomes for youth and adults that are eligible to receive Supported Employment services. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is working in collaboration with a variety of businesses statewide to expand Project Search opportunities and has been successful in expanding Project SEARCH.

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to work in collaboration with the Center for Development and Disability toward the implementation and sustainability of Supported Employment programs across the state. Services that are provided at Center for Development and Disability include education, advocacy, and outreach in the field of Supported Employment. Services are available through Partners for Employment to participants and their families, community providers, job developers, job coaches, employers, as well as, educational facilities. DVR is developing increased capacity to provide benefits advisements information through the Partners for Employment (PFE) agreement. DVR also collaborates with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide information on SSA benefits and Ticket to Work.