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## **WAITLIST FOR NMDVR SERVICES OPENS TO ALL CATEGORIES**

SANTA FE (November 21, 2022) – There is no longer a wait for vocational rehabilitation services in New Mexico for anyone determined eligible. The waitlist for New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services—which as recently as fall 2021 was more than 1,300 individuals—has been cleared.

“We could not have done this without the hard work and extra effort of our vocational rehabilitation staff all around the state,” says Nash Sisneros, deputy director of NMDVR’s Rehabilitation Services Unit. “We aim to increase the quality of life and growth of our participants in New Mexico.”

The agency will technically remain on what is referred to as an Order of Selection. But, while previously only those deemed to have a “Most Significant Disability” could receive supports from NMDVR, now individuals who fit the lesser criteria of “Significant Disability” or “Not Significantly Disabled”—as defined by the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration—may now immediately begin planning to receive services.

The final name was released from the waitlist on October 25. During calendar year 2022, more than 1,400 people were cleared, either receiving assistance or no longer pursuing services from the agency. That figure includes those who applied for services since January. The waitlist numbers were high due to staffing issues in recent years.

“Our doors are open, and we are pleased to now be able to assist any person in New Mexico with a disability who is seeking employment,” says NMDVR Director Casey Stone-Romero.

Individuals seeking to participate in the vocational rehabilitation program can fill out a referral form on the NMDVR website at <https://referral.dvr.nm.gov/> or visit their nearest NMDVR office. There are 22 field offices around the state: [www.dvr.state.nm.us/locations/](http://www.dvr.state.nm.us/locations/).

*The New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NMDVR) helps eligible individuals with documented disabilities find suitable employment. To do so, NMDVR partners with employers seeking opportunities to enhance and diversify their workforce. Vocational rehabilitation is a voluntary program supporting people who want to work. With a long history of success and proven methodology for making the best fits, NMDVR is committed to helping participants thrive in their communities.*

*The Vocational Rehabilitation program receives 78.7% of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For federal fiscal year 2023, the total funds awarded is \$22,066,600. The remaining 21.3% is funded by state appropriations and transfers from the Commission for the Blind and Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.*

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