

State Rehabilitation Council
Quarterly Meeting Agenda
February 26, 2026
NMDVR Field Office Conference Room
312 Nizhoni Blvd.
Gallup, NM 87301
SRC Meeting 10 am



I. Call to Order/Introductions/Roll Call
Meeting called to order at 10:03am

Roll Call:

Tracy Agiovlasitis, Present
TJ Chester, Present
Paula Seanez, Present
Jennifer Gelhardt, Present
Rebecca Sanford, Present
Breezy Gutierrez, Present
Veronica Alonozo, Absent
Sarah Michaud, Absent
Leah Johnson, Absent
Sasha King, Absent
Kendra Garcia, Absent
Marlencia Chee, Absent

Guest:

Antoinette Holmes, NMDVR
Angelina Montoya, NMDVR

II. Action Items

A. Approval of Agenda (action item)

- a. Set dates for next meeting to first item discussed
- b. TJ Chester motions to approve
- c. Paula Seanez seconds
- d. Unanimously approved

B. Approval of Minutes (action item)

- a. Remove "D" out of Sanford
- b. Rebecca Sanford motions to approve
- c. Jennifer Gelhardt seconds
- d. Unanimously approved

Next Meeting

- a. May 7th, 2026 10:00am – 2:00pm in person at GCD at Albuquerque
- b. August 13th, 2026 10:00am -2:00pm at the NMDVR Roswell office
- c. November 12th, 2026 10:00am - 2:00pm location TBD- Northern NM
 - i. Tracy will send out Save the Dates for entire year

III. DVR Directors Reports

A. Agency Director –Antoinette Holmes, Deputy Director on behalf of Director Stephon L. Scott

- a. NMDVR and the SRC have published their 2025 Annual Report and can be found on the DVR website
- b. Hiring
 - i. Filling vacancies were temporarily on hold during the federal shutdown
 - ii. Currently the hold has been removed and in the last couple weeks recruitment efforts are being made
- c. Vacancy's
 - i. Administrative Services Unit (ASU): 20%
 - ii. Rehabilitation Services Unit (RSU): 18%
 - iii. Disability Determination Services (DDS): 48%
 1. DDS has not been authorized by SSA to fill vacancies for more than a year
- d. Financial impact reports
 - i. 3 Financial impact reports were submitted during the Legislative session
- e. 2026 Legislative Session
 - i. The bill we were watching closely was Senate Bill 64
 1. Formalized the creation of the Office of Special Education in the Public Education Department
 2. Senate Bill 64 was passed in both houses
- f. WIOA Performance Assessment Results
 - i. DVR earned an Over Stat Program score of 96.79%
 1. Recently published in the WIOA for Program year 2024
 2. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in labor management
 3. It is administered under the US Department of Labor
- g. NM DDS
 - i. Staff earned 4 “PRO” Awards in January from the SSA office of Disability Adjudication Quality Review
 1. The award acknowledges outstanding work on specific and often complicated cases
 2. NMDDS earned 8 of these awards last year
- h. ASU Deputy Director David Soveranez retired at the end of December
 1. His duties are currently being covered by our CFO Samantha Rendon and CPO Devin Varela

B. RSU Update – Deputy Director

- a. National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute (NRLI)
 - i. New Cohort began in February 2026
 - ii. Focus on Leadership development
 - iii. 3 Attendees this Cohort
 1. Anita Sanchez, Program Manager
 2. Jennifer Saavedra, Transition Program Manager
 3. Dominique Nunez, RSU Staff Development Trainer
- b. Arbinger Institute Training
 - i. 15 members leadership 2-day professional development training
- c. DVR Holiday Donations
 - i. Albuquerque Metro offices donated 356 lbs of food, toiletries, and children's toys to Rio Rancho food pantry

- ii. Santa Fe Admin Office donated 261 lbs shelfed stable food to Food Depot
 - iii. DDS and Oakland office donated warm clothing and shelf foods to Albuquerque
 - iv. Lomas office donated socks and blankets to Village Hope Works
- d. Vocational In School Engagement (VISE) Project
 - i. Initiative to support PED in Graduation rates in New Mexico
 - ii. “Operation Graduation”
 - 1. Increase and promote graduation rates for students with disabilities
 - 2. DVR Goals established
 - a. Ensure all dedicated Pre-ETS Program hours are recorded accurately
 - b. Increase Pre-ETS Enrollment and Activities
 - c. Support Operation Graduation House Bill 171
 - d. Evaluate and Assess State of NM and Federal Education Policy
 - iii. State Plan 2-year modifications
 - 1. Coming due- additional guidance in terms of submission requirements
 - a. Allowed for states to request extensions on submission
 - i. NM requested extension to submit by April 30th
 - ii. All partners working together for final draft revisions in
 - b. DWS will be hosting public meeting
 - c. DVR will be hosting public meetings as well on DVR portions
 - i. Meeting dates are not in place yet but will be planned by early March
 - ii. Virtual meetings
- di. WIOA Performance
 - i. Measurable Skill Gains
 - 1. Negotiated level 53.4%
 - 2. Actual 53.3%
 - ii. Employment Rate- 2nd Quarter After Exit
 - 1. Negotiated Level 43.0%
 - 2. 42.4%
 - iii. Median Earnings- 2nd Quarter After Exit
 - 1. Negotiated \$5,080.00
 - 2. Actual \$5,663.00
 - iv. Employment Rate- 4th Quarter After Exit
 - 1. Negotiated 41.5%
 - 2. Actual 44.1%
 - v. Credential Attainment Rate
 - 1. Negotiated 39.1%
 - 2. Actual 41.3%
 - vi. Overall State Program Score 96.79%
- dii. NMDVR Community of Practice internally
 - i. Lead by training team
 - ii. Compilation of subject matter experts to staff complex cases mentors, coaches, technical assistance across the state
 - 1. Expansion of our ability to support staff
 - iii. 1-year long commitment for mentors and coaches
- diii. Business Outreach Team

- i. Presence known throughout the state on what is DVR support to employers
- ii. A few employees were invited to present at a National conference regarding Support to Employers
 - 1. Conference happening in April 2026
- iii. All Business Outreach staff have undergone the Windmills training
 - 1. Job Development Placement Tool
 - 2. Supported by CSAVR
 - 3. All staff will be trained under Train the Trainer
- h. Benefits Advisement (BA)
 - i. 1 of our BA completed their Social Security training
 - 1. Intensive training

C. DDS Administrator – Alan Hamlin

- a. DDS Federal Fiscal Year 2026 (09/28/2024 – 09/26/2025)
 - i. Workloads
 - 1. Currently exceeding initial claims target
 - 2. Slightly off pace on appeal target but trending toward achieving quarter 2 goal by 03/27/2026
 - 3. Off pace on continuing disability review target but trending toward achieving quarter 2 goal by 03/27/2026
 - b. Stop Light reporting
 - i. Reporting Red, Yellow, Green goal metrics tracking
 - 1. Provides transparent metric reporting and monitoring
 - a. shared with DDS and DVR leadership weekly
 - b. Quarter 2 DDS has moved many areas into the Green
 - ii. Staffing
 - 1. DDS staffing attrition from Disability Adjudicator (DA) classifications related to August 2025 State Personnel Job (SPO) Architecture changes
 - 2. There's currently no hiring authority from SSA
 - 3. NM DDS and DVR leadership meeting with SPO on 02/26, who approved the classification change for DA positions
 - iii. Self-Sustaining
 - 1. Due to the continued staff attrition and no current hiring authority from SSA, NM DDS is working to be self-sustaining with initial claim applications
 - 2. NM DDS is working with SSA to find national level partnership with the appeal applications to help ensure timely customer service
 - a. When hiring becomes available we will reassess this need
 - 3. Currently all applications are being handled by NM DDS with no out of state adjudication assistance
 - a. at current claim intake levels and staffing levels, the NM DDS anticipates increases in processing time for all decisions unless national support or hiring can be provided by SSA
 - 4. NM DDS is receiving medical consultant support on a national scale allowing decisions to remain in New Mexico and working to help reduce processing times

D. Update on Fair Hearings – Michelle Bowdon

- a. 1 FH request that landed up in a dismissal

IV. 121 Report – Paula Seanez

- b. No updates from Marci

- c. 5th year of funding
 - i. No site of Request for Proposals (RFP) out yet
 - ii. In contact with Program Officer for grants monthly
 - 1. Hoping for a 6th year, we would not have to compete, but we would submit and projects would keep rolling
 - 2. Continuing to work on a grant application using last year's criteria
 - a. Application will be ready just in case they give us a 60-day turnaround like they've done in the past we will be in a good position to submit our grant
 - iii. DVR
 - 1. I'm working with Rudy on a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)
 - a. We do have language in there about partnering to be funded if there is a lapse in funds or lapse of grant years
 - b. MOU ends in September 2026
 - iv. US Department of Education
 - 1. Tribal Consultations
 - a. Scheduled for February 10th
 - b. They did in person and virtual travel consultations with Tribes across the country to provide input regarding the change they're proposing that our program go within the Department of Interior
 - i. I believe they were proposing to send the States from the U.S. Department of Education originally it was supposed to go to Department of Labor and now they're proposing House and Human Services
 - ii. Our tribal Vice President as well as some of our County Council members were there to provide input
 - 1. Our input is to stay with where the statute goes because we're part of the rehab act so rather than going to Department of Interior which is where the Bureau of Indian Education Bureau of Indian affairs lies that we stay within wherever the State Federal grants go
 - iii. The deadline for providing written comment for Tribes willing to do so is March 12th
 - 1. We'll submit written comment
 - 2. Vacancies
 - a. Farmington- 2 positions
 - i. Hoping to find office space in Shiprock and bring the services back to the community there might be a possibility of getting those positions filled but right now our office space lease is in the City of Farmington
 - ii. We still have vacancies there for Counselors we do have a Rehab Technician in Farmington, our Crown Point staff goes to Farmington periodically and is assigned those cases
- d. Project SEARCH
 - i. Hilton Gardens off I-40 hosts Project SEARCH in Gallup
 - 1. Last year this site was given an Award for being an Outstanding Project SEARCH site
- e. Focus on Business Engagement and Professional Development

- i. Innovative Guided Rehabilitation Employer Engagement Training (IGreet)-Business Engagement approach through University of Boston
 - 1. Referrals
 - a. Zuni does not have VR programs
 - b. Dungarvan
 - c. Vocational Rehab
 - 2. Sonoran Center in Tucson, Arizona
 - a. Professional Development also includes NM staff
- f. Invited to speak on March 3rd at Rehab Academy at DVR
 - i. Not able to present because we are hosting our own Academy and referred her to Marci

V. SRC Chairperson's Report – Tracy Agiovlasis, Chair

- a. By-Laws
 - a. Dr. Scott signed them
 - b. Point of Discussion- “80k will be reserved for the SRC”
 - i. SRC must have a Resource Plan
 - ii. Dr. Scott would not want to be in violation of the By-Laws if DVR were funded with a lesser amount of appropriation
 - a. Possible language of “Subject to Appropriations”
 - iii. Language to be discussed, suggestion for an MOU
 - a. More discussion to happen on the best place to put the information
 - c. OMA Resolution
 - i. Chair has always signed but follow with DVR to see if they need to review and sign as well
- b. Paula will be attending the NCSRC / CSAVR in March 2026
- c. Council Membership
 - a. There are a few members terms coming to an end
 - i. Executive committee will stay in communication with those members and their statuses
 - b. Council still has Vacancies
 - c. 3 businesses and 1 veteran
- d. Add Rebecca to the SRC Employment Committee
- e. Tracy on behalf of SILC Chair
 - a. Updates:
 - b. The SILC continues to monitor the State Plan for Independent Living, which guides IL services in NM
 - i. We receive regular updates from the 5 CILs in NM
 - c. A quick summary of the impact of IL services from the Centers for Independent Living include:
 - i. 3,286 individuals with disabilities received services
 - ii. IL services were provided in 28 of the 33 counties in NM
 - iii. 96 New Mexicans with disabilities received nursing home transition services to support their desire to move out of a congregate care facility and into their own home
 - iv. 3,045 people with disabilities received IL skills training focused on topics including personal care, coping, financial management, self-reliance and household management
 - v. 111 individuals gained access to transportation that accommodates their disabilities
 - vi. 742 individuals gained access to housing or home modifications
 - vii. 77 youth with disabilities received assistance toward transition goals

- viii. 108 New Mexicans with disabilities received assistive technology
- ix. 1,474 people with disabilities received services to support their personal resource management goals
- x. 4,305 information and referral contacts were supported and connected with appropriate information to address their questions and service needs
- d. SILC and the NM CILs are seeking responses to an Unmet Needs Survey. We'd appreciate your help in sending the survey to disability stakeholders. Information is included here: New Mexicans with Disabilities Unmet Needs Survey and Information <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VFZWRK>
 - i. This survey and information provided has two goals
 - a. To gain valuable information about what you need so that NM SILC and CILs across the state can work to enhance programs and improve the services they provide now for New Mexicans who have disabilities
 - b. To give you, as a person or the family member of a person with a disability and/or chronic health condition, information about Centers for Independent Living (CILs), the services they have available and where you can go in your area to get help from a CIL
 - ii. We want to hear directly from people who have disabilities, their family members, caregivers and other stakeholders. It should take about 5 minutes, at most, to answer these questions. The survey will remain open.

VII. Old Business

- A. Consumer Satisfaction Survey Update
 - a. New Quote must be obtained for DVR to write up the contract
 - i. Tracy will reach out to vendor to get an updated quote
 - ii. Angelina will then jump in to assist with the DVR portion / procurement for this service
- B. SRC Bylaws follow up
 - a. We will update By-Laws as issues arise
 - b. Does DVR need to sign off on the Open Meetings Act Resolution
 - i. Angelina will follow up with Dr. Scott

VIII. New Business

- B. Annual Reports completed and submitted
 - a. Annual Report will be for October 1st 2025 – Sept 30th 2026
 - i. Add in the reporting time that way there is no confusion
- C. SRC Committee (Employment & Community Partnerships/Program, Review) Updates
 - a. Whoever is committee Chair may work with DVR when things are happening or who is the best POC for situations
 - b. Antoinette will create a DVR deadline timeline for the SRC (State Plan, Major Outcomes, etc.)
 - i. Each committee will meet as needed via in person or virtually
 - ii. Paula will follow up with Antoinette on the timelines
 - c. When committee meetings are called and a quorum of members will be present, the meeting must be advertised as an official meeting
 - d. An Executive committee meeting will be completed prior to the next meeting to ensure a timeline is set
- D. NCSRC Conference March 28-29, 2026, in Washington DC

- a. Paula will be attending the NCSRC and CSAVR portion and report back to us at the next meeting
- E. Next meeting agenda items
 - a. Membership and Committees review

IX. Comments from Audience
No comments from Audience

X. Adjournment
Meeting adjourned at 12:24pm by Chair

If you need a language translator or are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier or any other form of auxiliary aid or service to participate in this meeting, please contact NM DVR at the telephone number(s) listed below. Public documents, including the agenda or minutes can be provided in various accessible forms. For additional information, contact NMDVR. Telephone numbers: 1-800-224-7005 or 505-954-8500.

(Note: the SRC attempts to follow the order of items listed on the agenda; however, it should be noted that the order of specific items is tentative and may vary from the date of the printed agenda.)

