

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Table of Contents

Attachment 4.2(c)	p. 2	Input of State Rehabilitation Council ^[1]
Attachment 4.7(b)(3)	p. 6	Request for Waiver of Statewideness ^[2]
Attachment 4.8(b)(1)	p. 8	Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System ^[3]
Attachment 4.8(b)(2)	p. 9	Coordination with Education Officials ^[3]
Attachment 4.8(b)(3)	p. 13	Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations ^[3]
Attachment 4.8(b)(4)	p. 17	Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services ^[3]
Attachment 4.10	p. 18	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development ^[4]
Attachment 4.11(a)	p. 29	Statewide Assessment ^[3]
Attachment 4.11(b)	p.34	Annual Estimates ^[4]
Attachment 4.11(c)(1)	p. 35	State Goals and Priorities ^[3]
Attachment 4.11(c)(3)	p. 38	Order of Selection ^[5]
Attachment 4.11(c)(4)	p. 41	Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds ^[4]
Attachment 4.11(d)	p. 43	State's Strategies ^[3]
Attachment 4.11(e)(2)	p. 46	Evaluation and Reports of Progress ^[4]
Attachment 6.3	p. 48	Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services ^[3]

Footnotes

- ^[1] Required annually except for agencies that are independent commissions do not provide this attachment.
- ^[2] Required only of agencies requesting, or previously granted, a Waiver of Statewideness.
- ^[3] The following attachments should be submitted whenever the information needs to be updated.
- ^[4] The following attachments require annual updating and must be submitted each year.
- ^[5] Required Annually for All Agencies on an Order of Selection

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.2(c) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required annually by all agencies except those agencies that are independent consumer-controlled commissions.

Identify the Input provided by the state rehabilitation council, including recommendations from the council's annual report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other council reports. Be sure to also include:

- the Designated state unit's response to the input and recommendations; and
- explanations for the designated state unit's rejection of any input or recommendation of the council.

The following is the input from the state rehabilitation council. The Division's response has yet to be included.

Attachments to Title 1 of State Plan

Attachment 4.2 (c) – Input of State Rehabilitation Council

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Act), and 34 CFR §361.16.17 of its implementing regulations. The SRC gives advice to and works in partnership with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (referred to as "the Division" throughout this report) including input on the state plan. The following represent the comments and input of the State Rehabilitation Council with respect to the 2010 state plan. Some of the comments may be viewed as criticisms and/or concerns while others are complimentary. The SRC generally believes many good things are happening with Vocational Rehabilitation in Tennessee. However, there is much room for improvement if the Division is going to better enable citizens with disabilities to maximize their potential.

1. The SRC commends Assistant Commissioner Andrea Cooper for her ongoing commitment to a true partnership with the SRC and to her efforts to effectively communicate with the membership on major program initiatives. Ms. Cooper has demonstrated a willingness to meet with SRC representatives outside of regular quarterly meetings and has been willing to share information freely. Ms. Cooper recognizes and appreciates the role the SRC plays in the overall development of a productive program that meets the needs of people with disabilities. The relationship that has been forged between the Division and SRC is ultimately beneficial to people in Tennessee with disabilities and the members thank the Division for this relationship.
2. The SRC commends the Division for using a portion of its stimulus funds to purchase a new

electronic case management system. The SRC has been critical of the Division and the State of Tennessee in the past for its procurement of non-accessible equipment and systems. We have been assured that the new system is totally accessible. With that said, the SRC encourages the Division to now be more aggressive in recruiting people with disabilities to fill vacancies as they occur and to report back to the SRC on a regular basis on efforts to achieve this goal. The SRC urges the Division to review its ongoing use of equipment (i.e. copying machines, etc.) that are not accessible and continue to serve as barriers to employing people with disabilities.

3. The SRC commends the Division for its efforts to reduce the waiting list created by the Order of Selection. In the past the SRC has expressed much concern about the growing waiting list and welcomed news that the Order of Selection was being opened and everyone on the waiting list could be served. This good news is tempered by the fact so few of those coming off of the waiting list are actually being served. The vast majority are simply being closed. There is no real explanation as to why this is the case but the SRC would like more information gathered to determine why individuals who have gone through the process of applying and being placed on a waiting list would then not need or desire services when they are available, especially for those who were placed on the list more recently. The SRC would be most interested in knowing why this is the case. Did the individuals go on and obtain employment on their own without VR? Did they just give up and are now at home drawing a check? There has to be an explanation and one has not been provided. That may be because the Division doesn't know. The SRC would recommend the Division research this because the answers could impact services to clients in the future.
4. With respect to Order of Selection, we have concerns that the Division has developed and implemented policy and procedures for removing individuals from the waiting list but has not developed written policy and procedures that have been published or developed with the input of the SRC. We have concerns that all clients being removed from the waiting list are not being treated fairly and equally with other individuals receiving VR services. We encourage the Division to develop written policy and procedures for removing individuals from the waiting list and seek input from the SRC to ensure all individuals eligible to actively receive services are receiving the services necessary to achieve their employment goals. We would like to see safeguards put into place to make sure the Division exhausts all efforts to contact individuals waiting for services whose contact information may need to be updated before making a decision to close the case.
5. The SRC is also disappointed that the Division has elected to close priority categories again and only serve Priority Category 1 cases. Based upon the financial data provided to the SRC, we believe strongly that there are adequate resources available, especially with stimulus dollars that are available, to serve all eligible clients. Opening and closing Order of Selection is confusing to potential clients, referral sources, and probably even staff. The SRC strongly urges the Division to open the Order of Selection and leave it open. If it looks like doing so will have an adverse budgetary impact, the Division should look at savings elsewhere because serving every eligible client should be the number one priority.
6. The SRC is very concerned about the declining numbers of people with disabilities being placed into employment. The trend of closing fewer and fewer cases each year should be of real concern to the Division. In 2009, the Division closed only 1906 cases which is a decline of approximately 50% over the last 5 years. During that same time period, expenditures increased significantly. The SRC recognizes that the economy plays a factor as does the Order of Selection. But other states face the same challenges and the Division needs to study those states who have continued to perform well during tough times and explore replicating what those states are doing. The SRC would be happy to be part of that process. Keeping all categories open would ensure adequate active cases in the pipeline, which will increase successful closures.

7. The SRC remains concerned about the ongoing underfunding of the VR Program in Tennessee and the practice of carrying forward unspent federal dollars. Millions of dollars of federal funds are not being spent in the year for which they are allotted. Although RSA has confirmed that carrying forward unspent federal dollars is legal, the SRC is still concerned about the amount of dollars being carried forward. We've been told that within the next two years, we can expect to carry forward an entire year's allocation of federal dollars. Likewise, the SRC is concerned that stimulus dollars to a certain extent are being spent instead of federal dollars that require a match. This compounds the problem of the growing size of the carry forward. The SRC understands the difficulties of getting more state match in such tough economic times. However, the Division must be more aggressive in seeking match so these federal dollars can be used to benefit Tennesseans with disabilities. The SRC understands that carrying forward funds is legal, however, in light of the ongoing issue the SRC would recommend that at some point these federal dollars be turned back to RSA so they can be spent in another state to benefit people with disabilities unless there is a plan to obtain the necessary match so these funds can be spent. Before that happens, the SRC would recommend that the Division exhaust all matching sources including establishment grants.
8. It is our understanding that 72 of 135 school systems in Tennessee have a Transition Outcome Project implemented in their school system showing their dedication to transition services. The SRC encourage the Division to proactively increase VR services to school age students, including funding of projects that will increase student's and parent's engagement in pursuing goals, outcomes, and services that will lead to employment. Placing Transition to Work counselors in schools is one way to improve employment outcomes for students with disabilities by providing meaningful transition services such as job development, job placement, job coaching, transportation services, and summer employment as part of a student's IPE instead of waiting to implement VR transition services until a student's last year in school. Expectations of employment need to be set early in the student's school career and VR can and should play a major role in increasing the focus on employment for high school students.
9. It has come to our attention that clients who are due to receive assistive technology for achieving their employment goals are not receiving this technology in a timely manner in some cases. As a result, individuals are struggling to perform adequately in training programs. We recommend that the Division develop a system for providing needed assistive technology to individuals at the beginning of their employment endeavors and/or training programs so that they can perform to their full capabilities. It has been brought to the attention of several SRC members that the Division is applying a needs test to the provision of assistive technology services. The SRC is requesting information about this. Should this be the case, SRC questions the appropriateness and legality of this practice.
10. As a method for Vocational Rehabilitation to improve employment and career opportunities for its college graduates, the SRC recommends that the agency pilot an establishment grant with three post-secondary institutions in Tennessee (east, middle and west). Institutions must agree to work with VR clients to achieve an employment outcome; also they should agree to continue the program once the establishment grant concludes. Such a program will allow for students with disabilities to have a better opportunity for employment related to their major field of study.
11. The SRC commends the Division for its commitment to specialized services to individuals who are blind / visually impaired and deaf / hard of hearing. Although the Division is a combined agency, it has separate units to serve individuals with sensory impairments. Annually, the Division devotes over 15% of its budget to provide services to people who are blind and over 6% to serve those who are deaf or hard of hearing. With respect to the blind, the percentage of dollars devoted to these programs is comparable to what states with separate agencies for the blind spend. Although there has been interest amongst consumer groups to lobby the Legislature for a separate agency for the blind, there is no benefit to having a separate agency in light of the level of commitment to services to the blind. The SRC is proud of this

- commitment and urges the Division to continue this commitment to specialized services.
12. The SRC commends the Division for its continued strides in and support of its Randolph Sheppard Program. The Business Enterprises Program continues to be one of the best programs in the country. Despite the economic downturn, the program has increased sales and average earnings per blind vendor. The Division continues to be aggressive in opening new inmate commissaries as evidenced by 5 new ones opened in the last year. The SRC appreciates the willingness of the Department to fight in the courts to protect the blind vendors' priority. The SRC recommends that efforts be initiated to convince the state prisons to allow blind vendors to manage their commissaries. Such operations would create dozens of opportunities for blind vendors and could generate millions for the State.
 13. The SRC commends the Division for improvements to the website and for providing a list serve for SRC members to communicate more easily with each other.
 14. The SRC commends the Division for making adequate resources available to create a first class annual report which was submitted to the Governor and members of the General Assembly. The SRC is very proud of the 2009 report. The SRC looks forward to working with the Division to make further enhancements.
 15. The SRC understands that a complaint has been filed with the Office of Civil Rights. The SRC is concerned anytime a VR client feels it is necessary to file suit in order to receive appropriate service. Because the SRC is charged with giving input to the Division to help ensure that all clients' needs are being met, we would like to be kept apprised of any situation where the system is not working. This way we can be proactive in finding solutions. The SRC knows the Division will respond to the complaint to the Office of Civil Rights by working with CAP and the SRC to address the issue identified in the complaint.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010) Attachment 4.7(b)(3) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

Identify the types of services to be provided by the program for which the waiver of statewideness is requested.

The waiver request should also include:

- a written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the designated state unit the non-federal share of funds;
- a written assurance that designated state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect;
- a written assurance that all state plan requirements will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

The Division requests a waiver of statewideness in order to maintain twenty-three Third Party Agreements with other units of government, primarily local education agencies (LEAs). These Third Party Agreements are designed to provide enhanced and concentrated services to Transition School to Work students/clients covered by the agreements. The Division has a contract with each entity that is consistent with Federal regulations (34 CFR § 361.26) and includes the following provisions:

(a) The vocational rehabilitation services to be provided are identified in Section A. Scope of Services in each contract (Each contract has been submitted separately to RSA to provide the written assurances requested for this attachment);

(b) The LEA assures that non-Federal funds are made available to the Division by committing to their maintenance of effort in Section E.13 of the contract;

(c) The LEA assures that the Division's approval is required before services are provided with the Division's counselor determining eligibility for each client served; and

(d) The LEA assures, through the Division's vocational rehabilitation counselors, that all other state plan requirements, including the Order of Selection policy, are applied to persons receiving services through the agreement.

While the Division provides transition services to all LEAs throughout the state, these transition contracts enable the provision of an expanded and more intense transition service to students/clients resulting from the inclusion of job coaches, case manager assistants, and clerical staff that would not otherwise be available to work with the vocational rehabilitation clients. These contracts enable the Division to have a greater presence within the schools and act as a stronger resource to the LEAs in the provision of transition services.

A list of the LEA contracts is provided below.

DRAFT 2011

Anderson County Schools
Bledsoe County Schools
Blount County Schools
Carter County Schools and Johnson County Schools
Clarksville Montgomery County Schools
Cocke County Schools
Elizabethton City Schools
Greene County Schools and Greeneville City Schools
Hamblen County Schools
Henderson County Schools
Humboldt City Schools, Trenton Special School District, Bradford Special School District, and Trenton Special School District
Jackson-Madison County Schools
Johnson City Schools
Knox County Schools
McMinn County Schools
McNairy County Schools and Hardeman County Schools
Memphis City Schools
Putnam County Schools
Robertson County School
Sequatchie County Schools
Sevier County Schools
Union County Schools
Washington County Schools

**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for
Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)
Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with
Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide
Workforce Investment System**

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 investment system with respect to

- Federal, state, and local agencies and programs;
- if applicable, Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; and
- if applicable, state use contracting programs.

The Division has interagency cooperation, collaboration, and coordination with other entities that are not components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System.

The Division works in cooperation with:

The Department of Children's Services in serving youth with significant disabilities;

The Department of Health in providing services to individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI);

Post-secondary school systems in the provision of services to individuals with physical and mental disabilities;

The Department of Corrections in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities being released from state correctional facilities;

Local city police, county sheriffs and judges programs in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities being released from jails or on probation or trial diversion;

The Division of Adult and Family Services (Department of Human Services) in the provision of services for individuals with significant disabilities participating in services under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program;

The Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to mental illness, developmental disabilities, and alcohol and drug abuse;

The Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (Department of Finance and Administration) in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to intellectual disabilities; and

University of Tennessee, Center for Disability and Employment, to market to businesses the services provided by the Division and to recruit businesses to hire the Division's clients.

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Attachment 4.8(b)(2) Coordination with Education Officials**

- Describe 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 vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.
- Provide information on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to
 - 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;
 - transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
 - roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
 - procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services maintains an ongoing interagency agreement with the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Department of Children's Services, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Bureau of TennCare, Division of Intellectual Disability Services, Tennessee Department of Health and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and Tennessee Department of Corrections. The agreement, along with the Division's policy manual and Standard Procedures Directives, outlines the plans, policies and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services.

When a student who is IDEA eligible reaches the age of fourteen (14), the Individualized Education Program Team (IEP Team), as defined by 34 CFR § 300.344, formulates an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) as a component of the IEP that will assess the transition service needs of the student. The Division's staff is invited and to the extent possible participates in these IEP meetings.

The Division has been under an Order of Selection since 2001. Under the Order, the Division is only able to provide direct services to those eligible individuals who are most significantly disabled, but the Division must provide information and referral services to help all applicants find services through other agencies and entities.

DRAFT 2011

If the IEP Team determines that the student should be referred for vocational rehabilitation services, the student must be present at the IEP Team meeting when the referral is made. The Division's staff is to be available to inform the student and parents of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, the application procedures, the eligibility requirements including the Order of Selection, and the potential scope of services that may be available. When appropriate, the Division takes an application from the student and determines eligibility as well as whether the student is in an open priority category. If the student is in an open priority category, the Division's staff assists in the formulation of IEP/ITPs while in school and a vocational rehabilitation individualized plan for employment (IPE) when the student begins to focus on exiting the school system.

The agencies involved in the interagency agreement cooperate in developing and coordinating services for youth with disabilities within each respective agency's legal authority. The ultimate goal of each agency participating in the agreement is to provide, or cause to be provided, a continuum of appropriate services leading to transition from school into employment. The agreement provides for:

1. Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
2. Transition planning by personnel of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 (P.L. 108-446);
3. The roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
4. Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

A vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor is assigned to work with each local education agency (LEA) for the purposes of referrals and the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to eligible students. VR counselors provide technical assistance to school personnel (LEAs) to help them identify appropriate referrals for vocational rehabilitation services. The counselor also provides information and referral to students not eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

It is the Division's policy that the development and approval of the individualized plan for employment (IPE) occur by the time each student determined eligible for VR services leaves the school setting. The process for that is outlined above.

The interagency agreement identifies the financial responsibility of the Department of Education (DOE) to ensure that individuals who are IDEA eligible receive free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. Free appropriate public education (FAPE) means regular and special education and related services which:

- (a) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge to the parent;
- (b) Meet the standards established by state law, including the requirements of IDEA Part B and the Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards for the Governance of Tennessee Public Schools, issued by DOE;
- (c) Include preschool, elementary school, and secondary school (including appropriate vocational, career or work experience education); and
- (d) Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP). 34 CFR § 300.13.

DRAFT 2011

The interagency agreement relates the financial responsibility of the Division to ensure that individuals who are IDEA eligible and also meet the Division's eligibility requirements will receive Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Vocational Rehabilitation Services means any services necessary to determine eligibility and those services described in an individualized plan for employment (IPE) necessary to assist an individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining an employment outcome that is consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual.

The LEA is responsible for the educational costs related to the provision of special education and related services for the individual attending school. The agreement relates that if another public agency is obligated under federal or state law or assigned responsibility under state policy to provide or pay for any services that are considered special education or related services and are necessary for ensuring FAPE to students who are IDEA eligible, the public agency shall fulfill that obligation or responsibility, directly, through contract or by another arrangement. However, failure of that public agency to pay for that service does not relieve the LEA of its obligation to provide that service to an individual with a disability in a timely manner.

The Division is responsible for all costs necessary for eligibility determination and provision of services under an individualized plan for employment (IPE). The Division must take into account comparable services and benefits [34 CFR § 361.53 (c)(1)], available under any other program that does not interrupt or delay the progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the IPE.

The Division's staff maintains a working relationship with special education supervisors, vocational education supervisors, directors, secondary school guidance counselors, and LEA administrators for the purpose of providing outreach for students with disabilities and technical assistance to school personnel to assist the LEAs to prepare students with disabilities for career opportunities. The Division participates in in-service training programs for the LEAs, as well as in statewide special education conferences for the purpose of providing information regarding vocational rehabilitation services. The Division also participates in and organizes local community job fairs, job clubs, attends civic club/organization meetings to inform students and parents of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, the application procedures, the eligibility requirements, and the potential scope of services that may be available.

Other identification activities include completion of student health survey forms coordinated with guidance counselors or general education teachers to identify students with physical or emotional disabilities that do not meet the criteria for special education services (commonly referred to as Section 504 students).

The Division has a dedicated full-time state office position to serve as transition coordinator. This position serves as liaison with the State Department of Education and other partners in the interagency agreement to provide technical assistance and training related to vocational rehabilitation services. This position works with VR counselors and supervisory staff to improve access and services for students with disabilities. This position identifies, arranges for, or provides training to the Division's counselors, educators, students with disabilities, and families in a variety of areas related to transition services.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) contracts with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) as part of its transition initiative. The contracts provide for the Local Educational Agencies (school districts) to employ case manager assistants, job coaches and/or secretaries to work under the administrative supervision of the LEA. All services provided under these contracts/agreements have a vocational rehabilitation focus. All services provided under these contracts/agreements are in keeping with all state plan requirements to include our state's Order of Selection requirements. Services provided under these contracts/agreements are only available to applicants for, or recipients of, services of the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Although the Division utilizes contracts with LEAs as part of its transition initiative, all decisions affecting eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, the nature and scope of available services, and the provision of these services remain the sole responsibility of the vocational rehabilitation

counselor employed by the Division. VR staff is responsible for the determination to close cases and for all allocation of expenditures for services.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010) Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Based on information gathered by continuing statewide studies, the annual facility survey of public and private community rehabilitation programs and the on-going monitoring and annual evaluation of effectiveness, the Division continues to maximize the use of community rehabilitation programs to provide rehabilitation services in the most integrated setting possible consistent with the informed choices of the individual.

The Division is utilizing community rehabilitation programs throughout the state as follows:

1. The Division's Facility Program:

A. The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center (Center) at Smyrna is a state operated comprehensive residential rehabilitation facility that serves individuals with significant disabilities. The facility is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in programs of comprehensive vocational evaluation services, employee development services, and employment skills training services. The Center offers the following program and support services:

Program Services

- Comprehensive vocational evaluation and mobile evaluation services
- Job objectives and behavioral services, a pre-vocational work adjustment training program
- Occupational skills training in automotive maintenance/detailing, building maintenance and grounds keeping, business education, commercial cleaning, food service, and warehouse training
- Physical rehabilitation services to include: occupational, physical and recreational therapy; rehabilitation nursing services, personal care attendant training and adaptive equipment assessments. Outpatient services are also provided in occupational and physical therapy services and adaptive equipment assessments.
- Traumatic brain injury services to include: occupational, physical, cognitive, and speech/language therapy; vocational evaluation; behavioral instruction, job readiness instruction and community re-entry training.

- Transitional life skills training to include: managing self-care and daily living skills; home management skills and practices; financial management skills and practices; transportation; health maintenance; comparative shopping; meal preparation; and civil rights and advocacy.
- Vision impairment services to include: pre-vocational assessment and training for independent living; college preparation services; assistive technology assessments and training; computer training; self employment evaluation and instruction; GED preparation; and prerequisite training for entry into Tennessee Business Enterprises.

Support Services

- Residential living
- Client health services
- Case management services
- Drivers education
- Psychiatric and physician services
- " Recreation therapy and leisure-time skills
- Remedial education
- Job seeking skills training
- Psychological services
- Independent living skills training

The Center operates at a program capacity of 160 individuals and provides services to approximately 1,200 Tennesseans with significant disabilities each year.

The Center is a member of the National Consortium of State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers. An Advisory Council is utilized to provide valuable feedback used in guiding decision making in Center operations and program development. In addition, the Center conducts exit customer satisfaction surveys on individuals completing services, from each program of service provided, completes support services customer satisfaction surveys twice a year with clients receiving services, and conducts client family surveys, as well as a referring counselor needs assessment and satisfaction survey on an annual basis. Feedback obtained from these survey instruments is also used in guiding decisions about current and future support services and program services operations, as well as accessibility and physical plant operations.

B. A network of 17 Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers (TRCs) is located across the state providing day services to eligible individuals with significant disabilities, seeking competitive employment. All community TRC facilities are accredited by the Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in programs of comprehensive vocational evaluation and employee development services. The TRCs are supported by a combination of appropriated local and Federal funds.

Program Services

Vocational Evaluation

Comprehensive vocational evaluation services provide an individualized, timely and systematic process for identifying viable vocational options and developing employment goals and objectives.

An accredited comprehensive vocational evaluation service uses the following techniques to examine a wide range of employment alternatives:

- Assessment of functional/occupational performance in real or simulated environments
- Psychometric testing
- Preference and interest inventories
- Personality testing
- Extensive personal interviews
- Other appropriate evaluation tests depending on the individual
- Analysis of prior work experience and transferable skills

Employment Services

Services are based upon individual needs and can include comprehensive employment services or any individual component.

- Employee development services and/or job readiness instruction
- Community employment services (job development and placement)

Employee Development Services include:

- Work skills development through a facility workshop: including the use of contract work, job readiness assessment and training.
- Job readiness assessment and instruction includes: interview skills instruction, completing a job application, developing a resume, grooming and hygiene for the work place, self determination training, developing and using job-finding networks and resources.

Community Employment Services include:

- Job readiness assessment and instruction
- Job development and placement into competitive employment through the identification of employment opportunities in the local job market
- Development of realistic employment goals
- Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes
- Identification of resources to achieve and maintain employment.
- Coordination of and referral to employment related services.

TRC facilities conduct exit customer satisfaction surveys on individuals completing services from each program of service provided, completes a yearly survey with clients receiving services, referring counselors, contract providers, funding sources, employers, and other identified stakeholders. Feedback obtained from the surveys is used to improve program services.

2. Service Contracts:

DRAFT 2011

A. The Division plans to continue service contracts with the following community rehabilitation programs to ensure quality services statewide provided funding is available:

- Caring, Inc.
- Clovernook
- Deaf Centers: Knoxville Area Community Center for the Deaf; Jackson Center for Independent Living; Frontier Health: Interpreting Service for the Deaf; Partnership for Families, Children and Adults, League for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Department of Education
- Goodwill of Memphis
- National Federation For the Blind
- Park Center
- Technology Centers: East Tennessee Technology Access in Knoxville; Signal Centers; Technology Access Center of Middle Tennessee in Nashville; West Tennessee Special Technology Access Resource (STAR) Center in Jackson; and Mid South ACT in Memphis
- The ARC of the Mid-South
- University of Memphis Training and Technical Assistance Project
- University of Tennessee Center on Disability and Employment
- Vanderbilt University Project Opportunity
- Vanderbilt University Return to Work Program

B. The Division has two service contracts with community rehabilitation programs (Clovernook and Volunteer Blind Industries, Inc.) serving visually impaired clients in the areas of evaluation, adjustment, activities of daily living, orientation and mobility, training, job development and employment.

3. Letters of Understanding

A. The Division has encouraged the establishment and development of CRPs to improve and expand services. The Letter of Understanding (LOU) is an agreement between the Division and the CRP and in cooperation with the Department of Finance and Administration. The LOUs describe the functions and responsibilities of the Division and the CRP as well as the scope of services and payment methodology agreed upon by both the Division and CRP in a joint effort of improving and expanding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

B. The Division has 48 general LOUs with service providers throughout the state. The Division also has 93 supported employment LOUs; 87 job placement LOUs, and 71 LOUs for trial work experiences.

Items one (1) through three (3) above are used to provide needed services such as but not limited to:

- Vocational evaluation
- Personal and work adjustment
- Transportation
- Vocational training
- Job readiness training
- Job development
- Job coaching
- Job placement
- Supported employment
- Rehabilitation technology
- Orientation and mobility
- Activities of daily living
- Trial work experiences
- Follow-up and follow along services

**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for
Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)
Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative
Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment
Services**

Describe the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- supported employment services; and
- extended services.

The Division has interagency arrangements and coordination with other entities for the provision of supported employment services and extended services.

These include:

The Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (Department of Finance and Administration) in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to intellectual disabilities;

Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities in the provision of services for individuals with significant disabilities due to mental and/or physical impairments that began during the early developmental years;

The Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to mental illness, developmental disabilities, and alcohol and drug abuse;

The Tennessee Employment Consortium, an independent association of community rehabilitation providers and state agencies developed jointly by the Division, the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services, and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities to provide a forum for all stake holders to review and discuss state policies and share best practices; and

University of Tennessee, Center for Disability and Employment, contract for supported employment consultants to assist community rehabilitation providers in the provision of supported employment services and staff training and development.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program

and

State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

- 1 Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:
 - the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
 - the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
 - projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state 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.

The Division received 8,913 new applications for services in Fiscal Year 2009 and provided services to 30,289 individuals.

The Division currently experiences an overall staff attrition rate of approximately nine percent (9%). Based on a total of 20 vacancies for the past year, the attrition rate for counselor level positions is slightly lower at 8%. Of the Division's 639 positions, 130 state employees (20%) are within 5 years of meeting requirements for full retirement benefits (based on 30 years of service). The Division's staffing level remains adequate to meet the demand for services in the upcoming fiscal year.

The Division continues to receive and maintain monthly position classification/staffing reports prepared by the state's Department of Human Resources. The reports detail each position by classification code, filled/vacant, salary, and other pertinent information. The reports are used to project the need for future staff positions along with an analysis of years of service, projected retirement dates, etc. The Division also receives/maintains reports/data in order to determine minority staff representation and Affirmation Action planning.

Position	Total	Vacant	Projected Vacancies
ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN 1	2	0	50%
ADMIN ASSISTANT 1	2	0	50%

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ADMIN SECRETARY	7	0	42%
ADMIN SERVICES ASSISTANT 2*	2	0	0%
BLIND SERVICES REHAB CTR MGR	1	0	0%
BUDGET ANALYST 2*	1	0	0%
BUILDING MAINTENANCE WORKER 2	5	1	0%
BUILDING MAINTENANCE WORKER 3	1	0	20%
BUSINESS ENT CONSULTANT 2*	5	0	0%
BUSINESS ENT SPECIALIST	7	1	14%
BUSINESS ENT SUPERVISOR	3	0	33%
CLERK 2	1	0	0%
CUSTODIAL WORKER 2	6	0	17%
CUSTODIAL WORKER SUPV 1	1	0	0%
DHS PROGRAM COORDINATOR	15	0	15%
DHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR 1	5	0	20%
DHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR 2	4	0	25%
DHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR 3	2	0	25%
DHS PROGRAM MANAGER	5	0	60%
DHS PROGRAM SPECIALIST	6	5	17%
DHS PROGRAM SUPERVISOR	9	1	55%
FACILITIES MANAGER 1	1	0	0%
FIELD SUPERVISOR 1	33	6	33%
FIELD SUPERVISOR 2	4	0	25%
HEARING IMPAIRED DIRECTOR	1	0	0%
INFO RESOURCE SUPPORT SPEC 5	1	0	0%
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE 2*	9	2	22%
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE 3	1	0	0%
NURSE'S ASSISTANT 2*	2	0	0%
OCC THERAPY ASSISTANT (CERT)	2	0	0%
OFFICE SUPERVISOR 1	6	1	50%
ORIENTATION & MOBILITY SPEC	1	0	0%
PHYSICAL THERAPIST	1	0	0%
PHYSICAL THERAPY TECHNICIAN	1	0	0%
PHYSICIAN	1	1	0%
PHYSICIAN-PSYCHIATRIST	1	1	0%
PROCUREMENT OFFICER 1	1	0	0%

DRAFT 2011

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINER 1	2	0	0%
PSYCHOLOGIST	2	0	50%
RECREATION THERAPIST 2	6	0	33%
RECREATION THERAPIST 3	1	1	0%
REGISTERED NURSE 2*	1	0	0%
REGISTERED NURSE 3	1	0	0%
REGISTERED NURSE 4	1	0	0%
REHAB ASSISTANT	63	11	33%
REHAB ASSISTANT SUP	1	0	0%
REHAB BEHAVIORAL INST 2*	9	1	22%
REHAB INSTRUCTOR	1	0	0%
REHAB INSTRUCTOR-BLIND*	19	0	37%
REHAB SUPERINTENDENT	1	0	0%
REHAB TRNG CENTER MANAGER	17	1	35%
SECRETARY	81	5	30%
SECURITY CHIEF	1	0	0%
SECURITY GUARD 1	3	0	33%
VOC REHAB COUNSELOR 2*	264	20	21%
VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTOR-PER SPEC	9	1	33%
	639	59	

2. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:
 - a list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
 - the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of

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

In Tennessee, there are two universities that have Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) certified programs providing a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. One is in the eastern part of the state at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and the other is at the University of Memphis located in the western part of the state.

The University of Tennessee Knoxville (UTK) has an on-campus program with a current enrollment of 18 students. Additionally, 13 individuals are enrolled in UTKs distance learning program of which 11 students are employees of the Division. Of the 31 currently enrolled, 6 students (19%) have disabilities and 4 students (13%) represent minority backgrounds. For the federal fiscal year (10/08 - 9/09), 15 students graduated from the on-campus program. All graduates met the academic criteria to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam.

The University of Memphis currently has 23 graduate students in their on-campus program. None (0%) of these students are employed by the Division. Of the 23 on-campus students, 6 have a disability (26%) and 13 represent a minority group (57%). For the federal fiscal year (10/08 - 9/09), 4 students graduated from the on-campus program. All graduates met the academic criteria to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam and one (25%) successfully obtained their CRC credential.

Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
University of Memphis	23	0	9	4
University of TN – Knoxville	31	19	10	15

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

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

The Division's in-state training staff continues to meet quarterly with the program administrators at the University of Tennessee and the University of Memphis for the purpose of planning and sharing information relative to personnel development activities. These meetings provide the mechanism for gathering information on an annual basis relative to the number of students enrolled in their respective rehabilitation counselor education programs, as well as the number who graduated from their programs during the past year.

To further increase the number of counseling staff participating in masters in rehabilitation counseling programs, the Division worked closely with the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in

developing a new distance learning program.

To advance recruitment activities, the Division has dedicated a program specialist position in the staff development unit. This program specialist is actively seeking out other masters level programs across the nation; primarily those with RSA funded slots, to increase the number of incumbent staff in masters programs. Other duties of the program specialist include developing/distributing recruiting brochures at job fairs, speaking to graduate level programs to promote state employment in the rehabilitation field and encouraging incumbent staff to take advantage of graduate level training opportunities in rehabilitation counseling distance learning programs. The Division recognizes that recruitment activities are also the responsibility of counseling, supervisory and management level staff across the state with these personnel involved in recruitment activities in their regional and local communities. To enhance recruitment activities, the Division is actively working with its Human Resources Department to explore ways to expand and/or streamline employment opportunities.

The Division continues its recruitment policy for staff from minority backgrounds and for staff who are individuals with disabilities. Along with the dedicated program specialist, supervisors and counselors continue their recruitment efforts from historically black colleges and universities as well as institutions of higher education noted for a high student population of individuals with disabilities. Supervisors and counselors continue to visit high schools and participate in job fairs in an effort to acquaint students with the rehabilitation counselor education programs, especially the programs at the University of Tennessee and the University of Memphis.

Counselors continue to counsel and encourage clients who are interested in pursuing post secondary training, especially clients from minority backgrounds, to consider vocational rehabilitation counseling as a profession. The Division's program manager for staff development and the program specialist continue to work closely with university rehabilitation counselor education program administrators to stress the need for their recruitment of applicants from minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities into their training programs.

Currently incentives for incumbent staff to participate in a masters degree program include financial assistance with tuition, books, fees, and minimal educational leave. Funding for a pay incentive based upon successful completion of a masters degree program was approved in January 2005 for graduates and has been requested and approved for each successive graduate.

The Division expects to retain qualified rehabilitation professionals who are on the staff by providing support services which will make their jobs easier. Counselors have computer capability and receive training in a variety of programs, including Internet utilization, to access rehabilitation materials. Numerous films, books and other printed materials are available to all offices within the Division. Counselors are encouraged to request copies of any materials of a professional nature which would assist them in their jobs.

The Division is continuing to explore additional ways to enhance retention of qualified staff. Letters of appreciation are sent by the Assistant Commissioner to employees who have exhibited exemplary performance or excelled in certain areas (e.g., receiving CRC credential). In addition to flexible work hours, the vocational rehabilitation program leadership is also exploring other avenues to promote retention, such as a compressed work week, to increase job satisfaction and staff morale.

Personnel Standards

Describe the state agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification,

licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and

2. to the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, institutions of higher education, and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

Be sure to include the following:

- specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards;
- procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period;
- the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards;
- the identification of a plan for training newly hired personnel who do not meet the established standards to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

The Division continues to use the national standard which is a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field, as defined by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). During the past fiscal year, a total of 10 incumbent counselors have graduated from masters in rehabilitation counseling distance learning programs (8 from University of Kentucky and 2 from University of North Texas).

The Division currently has 25 counseling staff enrolled in graduate level programs in rehabilitation counseling (10 at University of Tennessee - Knoxville, 4 at University of Wisconsin-Stout, 2 at Auburn University, 7 at the University of Kentucky, 1 at Winston-Salem University, 1 at North Texas State University). Additionally, one counselor has a masters degree in a related area and is enrolled in the University of Kentucky to complete a few CORE courses needed to meet the CSPD standard. One counselor with a related masters degree completed core courses at the University of Kentucky in December 2009 and now meets the state's CSPD standard. A total of 12 counseling staff are expected to complete their graduate programs and graduate in May 2010. For the fall 2010 term, 12 counselors are in the process of applying for enrollment in distance learning masters programs in rehabilitation counseling. Despite the Division's efforts to recruit and retain vocational rehabilitation counselors with masters degrees in rehabilitation counseling, The Division hires a number of applicants with bachelors degrees (minimum standard) primarily because of the inability to hire enough people who meet the national standard for qualified counselors. There are many reasons beyond the control of the Division as to why the majority of incumbent counselors and counselor applicants do not meet the national CSPD standard, including:

- There is an inadequate number of in-state masters degree training programs to feed candidates into our system. There are currently only two such university training programs in Tennessee (and these are located in the far eastern and western regions of the state).
- Many counselor positions are in rural areas where it is more difficult to recruit masters degree candidates.
- The vocational rehabilitation counselor 2 position requires a bachelors, not a masters, degree due to the insufficient number of applicants holding the appropriate masters degrees.
- State law prohibits requiring incumbent counselors or new hires to get a masters degree as a condition of continued employment since the position does not require a masters degree.
- State civil service rules allow substitution of experience for education levels above the minimum qualification. Masters degrees in qualified fields are weighted more heavily than experience, however, to give appropriate masters holders a higher rating on the civil service

register.

Additional obstacles the Division has been unable to overcome include:

- A limited number of RSA sponsored training grants, and the number is shrinking;
- Universities awarding RSA training grants to new students rather than continuing to sponsor counselors who started the program on RSA sponsored training grants.
- Limited training slots in existing university programs, even where we fund such training through our section 110 dollars; and
- Staff turnover.

Funding to support masters in rehabilitation counseling activities continues to be pursued through reallocation of traditional in-service training monies. Also, the Division continues to work closely with any college or university to help secure any grant funding made available to help the Division further counselor education.

Despite the Division's extensive efforts to hire and retrain staff, currently only 45% of counseling staff have a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling (or closely related area) or are currently enrolled in CORE training program. Of the counselors currently meeting the CSPD standard, 41% are CRC credentialed. The Division is focusing efforts to hire and retrain incumbent staff to ensure only qualified rehabilitation counselors are performing nondelegable functions by December 31, 2018. Until this date, all counseling staff, those that currently meet CSPD qualifications and those that do not, are permitted to continue performing all counseling duties, including nondelegable functions. Efforts are underway to work with the Division's Human Resources Department regarding proposed changes in hiring practices.

All counselors, including new hires and incumbent staff, who do not meet the CSPD standard have an individualized training plan to address training needs. The individualized training plan identifies training topics directly tied to the timely and effective service delivery of vocational rehabilitation services. The development of an individualized training plan will be conducted jointly by the counselor and his/her immediate supervisor and will identify not only training in critical areas of service delivery, but also identify additional training geared to meet the individualized needs of each counselor. Discussion regarding enrollment in a masters in rehabilitation counseling program to comply with the CSPD standard will also be a part of the supervisor/counselor planning session.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors are being encouraged to take advantage of any training that will enable them to meet the CRC requirements. The state Department of Human Resources has guidelines in place for compensating employees who obtain a nationally recognized professional certification during their employment with the state.

The two main objectives outlined in their policy statement are:

1. To recognize employees who choose to enhance their competencies and service to the state through acquisition of knowledge and skills relevant to the performance of their major professional duties and responsibilities.
2. To provide an incentive to employees who successfully demonstrate acquisition of such competencies by attaining certification from a nationally recognized professional organization.

The intent is to provide both a means of encouraging employees to attain professional competencies and to provide an incentive for these employees to remain in state service. Funding for this incentive program continues to be very limited. However, the Division is aggressively seeking adequate funding for this incentive. In an effort to assist CRC staff with maintaining this credential, the Division has received approval from the CRCC to provide continuing education credits for qualified training events.

Staff Development

Describe the state agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

1. 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; and
2. procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

The Department of Human Services and the Division of Rehabilitation Services requires an annual training needs assessment to determine training needs of staff. Our training needs assessment is completed through the following methods:

1. Statewide Training Needs Assessment Survey
2. Individual staff training plans
3. State rehabilitation management and administrative staff input
4. State Human Resources Department training division mandates
5. Rehabilitation Services Administration guidelines
6. Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

Program case reviews conducted by the Division's Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance Unit are also utilized to identify strengths and deficiencies among staff and related training needs.

Key needs identified by counseling staff and Division management include:

Training Topics

1. Vocational Exploration
2. Guidance and Counseling
3. Employment
4. Plan Development
5. Caseload Management
6. Autism/Spectrum Disorders
7. Traumatic Brain Injuries
8. Behavior Management
9. Psychiatric Disorders
10. Services to the Blind/Visually Impaired
11. Medical Aspects of Disabilities
12. Services to the Deaf/Hard of Hearing

All Division staff completed a training needs assessment in February 2010. Staff responses denote interest in the following areas:

Serving specific Disability groups:

- Autism
- Traumatic brain injuries
- Mental Health / psychiatric disorders
- Blindness / visually impaired
- Deafness / hard of hearing

Skill/performance development:

- Assistive Technology
- Job development
- Job placement

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- Caseload management
- Eligibility / priority categories
- Vocational exploration
- Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- Vocational guidance and counseling
- Vocational assessments
- Financial (determination of economic need)
- Supported Employment

Other training areas:

- Independent living issues
- Behavior management
- Client Supports
- Comparable benefits
- Informed choice

The Division continues to provide on-going training and technical assistance regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act to staff and the general public, including business and industry.

The Division continues to contract with technology centers across the state for training and technical assistance in rehabilitation technology services. Rehabilitation technology contracts are in place with the East Tennessee Technology Access Center (Knoxville), Technology Access Center of Middle Tennessee (Nashville), West Tennessee STAR Center (Jackson), Signal Center (Chattanooga), and Mid-South Access Center for Technology (Memphis).

The Division's employees continue to receive specialized training in assessment and vocational evaluation activities. Through a partnership with the University of Memphis, vocational evaluators receive extensive instruction in the appropriate selection of assessment tools, interviewing skills, evaluation techniques and report writing.

Evaluators complete a competency examination with subsequent training provided based on the individualized needs of each employee. New counselors receive, via a new counselor training program, training relative to assessments, vocational evaluation and interpreting medical and psychological reports to assist them in acquiring skills to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of individuals with disabilities. Training in the areas of vocational counseling, job placement and other topics relevant to client service delivery continue to be focal areas for the Division.

A statewide training committee is currently developing new training modules to address the Division's needs. This new training program will provide supervisory staff with presentations, handouts and related training aids to assist them in providing direct training to new and incumbent counseling staff. This expanded training program will also include additional classroom activities to provide hands-on experience in critical areas such as interviewing, vocational counseling, interpreting reports for eligibility determinations and developing individualized plans for employment.

The Division continues to utilize web-based means of training delivery (e.g., webinars and webcasts). Division employees are encouraged to participate in web-based training events as offered through the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Center as available.

The Division continues to use a comprehensive training database for tracking training activities which includes names of staff completing each activity and pre-test and post-test scores. This database also includes employees educational levels and credentials.

The Division has posted informational memoranda on its intranet website to provide staff with an easily accessible means of acquiring information on current research, resources and related activities in the vocational rehabilitation field. Leadership staff also disseminates new

information (such as the latest Institute on Rehabilitation Issues publications) through electronic conveyance. Employees, particularly those with specialized job responsibilities, are encouraged to attend conferences, seminars and training workshops relative to their specialty areas. Local, regional and statewide meetings provide an additional avenue for keeping employees informed of new developments in the vocational rehabilitation field.

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 the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

The Division has policies and procedures to ensure that it includes among its personnel, or has readily available, the services of (1) Individuals able to communicate in the native languages of applicants and eligible individuals who have limited English proficiency through WorldWide Interpreters; and (2) Individuals able to communicate with applicants or eligible individuals in appropriate modes of communication.

During staff orientation, new counselor training, annual Title VI training and other training activities, Division staff members are informed of specific procedures to be followed to communicate with limited English speaking individuals. Telephonic translation services are available through WorldWide Interpreters. All regions have received orientation packages to be used to train all of their staff in the use of this service.

Additionally, through a quality award from the RSA In-Service Training Grant, funds are being utilized for training staff in Spanish language skills and cultural diversity. A 12-week Spanish in the Workplace training program has been conducted for staff in various regional offices throughout the state. The Division's communication materials have also been developed and implemented in Spanish.

The Division continues to recognize its responsibility for employing or obtaining the services of sign language interpreters, which fall within the definition of appropriate modes of communication in (34 CFR § 361.5(b) (5)), to the extent necessary to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf or deaf-blind. The Division's policy addresses the (1) significance of such services, (2) the selection of service providers, (3) the scheduling and payment for services, and (4) an evaluation process for such services.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

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 Improvement Act.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) provides renewed emphasis toward the planning of service delivery and collaboration of the various divisions and programs designated to serve children and youth with disabilities.

The Division has an interagency agreement with the Division of Special Education, state Department of Education providing administrative support for a coordinated, collaborative effort of service delivery. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Blind and Visually Impaired Services units continue agreements with the Tennessee School for the Blind and the Tennessee School for the Deaf. Networking of the two divisions relative to transition services has provided a means for coordinating and sharing information relative to personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. There is ongoing communication between the two divisions and each division has responsibility for providing input into personnel development activities.

DRAFT 2011

An interagency agreement was developed to fulfill the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). The purpose of this agreement is to identify and define the financial responsibility of each state agency for providing services under IDEA and to facilitate the provision and coordination of services for all children with disabilities. The following state agencies are participating in this agreement: Department of Education (Division of Special Education; LEAs; TEIS; Department of Children's Services; Department of Finance and Administration (TennCare; Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (DIDS)); Department of Health; Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services; Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Corrections and the Bureau of TennCare.

Departmental representatives have formed the Secondary Transition Interagency Workgroup and hold monthly interagency meetings to identify and address issues relative to transition services, particularly what is happening in transition services and what is lacking (resource mapping). The Division's transition school to work coordinator is also serving on the Mayors Advisory Council for Special Education in Metro Nashville Public Schools and has been recently invited to join the Youth Transition Task Force, an interagency group headed by the Department of Mental Health.

The Division continues to recognize the value of the involvement of the Division's State Rehabilitation Council in its personnel development activities. It is the policy of the Division to give the Council ongoing review and input on the development of issues associated with the Division's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. The Council continues to be involved with CSPD issues associated with recruitment and retention of staff, counselor salaries and pay incentives for successful attainment of a masters degree in rehabilitation, and training for existing staff to obtain their masters degree.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
- individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and
- individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

The Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division), in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), completed a comprehensive assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of Tennesseans with disabilities in the fall of 2009 and is conducting needs assessments on a three-year cycle. As required in 34 CFR § 29, the information obtained from a number of sources was assessed and analyzed to determine:

The needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly the vocational rehabilitation service needs of:

- (A) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who need supported employment services (Research Objective I);
- (B) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program (Research Objective II);
- (C) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system (Research Objective III); and

The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the state of Tennessee (Research Objective IV).

METHODOLOGY

A variety of methodologies were used in order to address the four stated research objectives. They included:

- A program needs assessment for the vocational rehabilitation program conducted by the

DRAFT 2011

Sparks Bureau of Business and Economic Research (SBBER) at The University of Memphis;

- Analysis of various disability populations statistics;
- Analysis of client and community feedback since the last assessment including an on-going customer satisfaction survey of individuals with disabilities who were served by the Division conducted by SBBER, input from regional management staff of the Division, input from the SRC, input from the Division's various constituency boards, and public hearings; and
- The Division's data and experience.

The methodology for each objective is outlined below.

Research Objective I

In order to assess individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services, a vocational rehabilitation participant/client survey was created by SBBER. The sample population was drawn from the database of vocational rehabilitation clients that SBBER already surveys, which include Closure 26 clients, Closure 28 clients, and Active status clients. The survey was conducted via telephone by the survey interviewers at SBBER. The sample of Closure 26 participants represents at least a 90% confidence level that the results of this survey accurately reflect the total population. The sample of Closure 28 participants represents at least a 90% confidence level that the results of this survey accurately reflect the total population. The sample of Active Client participants represents at least a 95% confidence level that the results of this survey accurately reflect the total population. All of the vocational rehabilitation participants surveyed were individuals with the most significant disabilities.

The Division's data and experience was also used to complete this assessment.

Research Objective II

In order to address individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities that have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program, several databases were researched by the SBBER to provide critical numbers. Those databases included: The United States Census Bureau, The American Community Survey data, Social Security data, and Department of Labor data. The report was based on the data from those sites as well as the Division's data and experience.

Research Objective III

In order to assess individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, a survey was created by SBBER to be administered to the staff and personnel of that system, including but not limited to Career Centers, One Stop Centers, and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors. The survey was administered via a web-based survey developed by the SBBER. The on-line computer survey was conducted through a web-based system that is completely anonymous.

The Division's data and experience was also used to complete this assessment.

Research Objective IV

In order to make an assessment of the need to establish, develop, and/or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state, a survey was created to be administered to the staff, personnel, and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors of those programs as well as transition teachers in the school districts. The survey was administered via web-based survey developed by the SBBER. The on-line computer survey was conducted through a web-based system that is completely anonymous.

The Division's data and experience was also used to complete this assessment.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Research Objective I

This research objective focuses on determining the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who need supported employment services.

With the Division being under an order of selection since 2001, it has focused heavily on meeting the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities. All indications are the majority of these needs are being successfully met.

- 95.4% of active and closed clients surveyed in 2008-2009 were satisfied with the overall quality of the vocational rehabilitation program.
- In response to an open-ended question in the SBBER needs assessment asking what was missing from the vocational rehabilitation program, 441 respondents answered "nothing." The next highest response had 18.
- The majority of client respondents to the needs assessment indicated their needs were being met by vocational rehabilitation.

Clients viewed their most important needs as:

1. Job Placement
2. Training and education
3. Job Referral
4. Finding Jobs

While clients viewed these needs as being met, the current economic situation has certainly added stress to meeting the employment needs of people with the most significant disabilities.

The primary needs identified by clients as not being met are support services including child care, transportation, and living expenses (maintenance).

The number one need identified by those surveyed other than clients is additional funding for the Division in order to continue to address the needs of those not being served by the order of selection. Better communication throughout the system, including services to employers, and improved information flow to the general public were tied as the second greatest needs.

In terms of supported employment, it was felt the need was being met by every group to their satisfaction except for family members. We believe this concern relates directly to, not to the supported employment service provided by vocational rehabilitation, but the challenge of appropriate follow-along services after the vocational rehabilitation services are completed.

Research Objective II

This research objective focuses on determining the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program.

The largest known unserved group is those applicants who are not receiving services as a result of the Division's order of selection. While the Division has taken 11,312 cases off the waiting list since 2008, priority category 1 remains the only open priority category on a daily basis.

DRAFT 2011

The order of selection explains why those in the special education system identified the most unmet needs of all groups surveyed. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implementation of a free appropriate public education for all has created an expectation for educators, parents, and students that vocational rehabilitation will also be available for all. Tennessee's order of selection places those other than the most significantly disabled in the unserved category.

Population By Race	2009 Division Served	Tennessee Census
White	69.1%	80.4%
Black	29.5%	16.8%
Other Minorities	1.4%	6.5%

In terms of minorities, reviewing those served by the Division in 2009, Whites totaled 69.1%, Blacks totaled 29.5%, and Other Minorities totaled 1.4%. In comparison, from the Tennessee Census Bureau 2008 estimates, Whites totaled 80.4%, Blacks totaled 16.8%, and Other Minorities totaled 6.5% for the whole population in Tennessee. While these numbers indicate that Blacks are not underserved, an opportunity would potentially be indicated for Other Minorities.

The Division's research and work with specialists seem to indicate Other Minorities, especially Hispanics, are less likely to seek assistance from programs like vocational rehabilitation. The Division, however, recognizes an increasing number of individuals living in Tennessee who speak only Spanish, as well as large populations of immigrants from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Needs for people with disabilities do not appear to differ across the racial scale as much as they do across an economic one. Increasing budget cuts at both the federal and state levels have accentuated the real needs of health care, child care, and personal care for people with disabilities.

Other than those issues created by the order of selection, the Division is not aware of any underserved disability areas in the state. The Division is aware of the need to provide ongoing education and training to its staff regarding all disability areas, especially increasingly diagnosed ones such as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Research Objective III

This research objective focuses on determining the needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system.

The Division is an active partner in Tennessee's Workforce Investment System. Twenty-one counselors are located in various career centers across the state. Despite that, all of our clients surveyed felt that utilizing the career centers and one-stop centers was not applicable to them. While this is expected to a degree because of the severity of the population the Division is currently serving, it also highlights the need for the system to become more disability friendly.

Based upon input from Division personnel who participate on local Workforce boards and from the Division's counselors who serve the Career Centers, individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce system require the following services and accommodations from the Career Centers:

- Continued efforts to meet program accessibility and accommodation needs;
- Understanding of referral processes and eligibility for program services;
- Navigation through the career center programs;
- Collaboration with and feedback from program case managers; and
- Disability awareness and etiquette training for the workforce staff.

Research Objective IV

This research objective focuses on determining the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the state of Tennessee.

Findings indicated the following needs:

- Supported employment particularly in rural areas;
- Expansion of employment networks to meet the needs of clients;
- CRPs to do quality trial work experience;
- Additional job coaches for supported employment and non-supported employment clients throughout the state;
- Additional work adjustment resources throughout the state, especially in areas not covered by the Division's community rehabilitation centers;
- Qualified vocational evaluations throughout the state, especially in Davidson and Shelby Counties;
- CRPs, especially in rural counties, to meet the needs of deaf-blind individuals; and
- Transportation services, especially in rural counties, to access services and employment.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010) Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates

1. Tennessee's population based on United States Census Bureau estimates for 2007 is 6,149,116. Tennessee's population 21 to 64 is 3,579,617.

Research data from the 2007 American Community Survey indicates that:

- A. Approximately 12.8% of Americans 21 to 64 have a disability.
- B. Approximately 58.2% of those Americans with a disability have an employment disability.
- C. Approximately 16.8% of Tennesseans age 21 to 64 have a disability.
- D. Approximately 61.4% of those Tennesseans with a disability have an employment disability.

Research data further indicates the percentage of people with disabilities in Tennessee employed remains below the national averages.

2. In Fiscal Year 2009, the Division of Rehabilitation Services provided services to 30,289 individuals. Of this number 27,932 met the eligibility criteria of the program. A total of 735 were individuals who met the eligibility criteria, but were not in an open priority category as of September 30, 2009. It is projected that 30,000 individuals will receive services and that 27,000 individuals will meet the eligibility criteria of the program and receive services in accordance with the Order of Selection during Fiscal Year 2011.

It is estimated that the number of individuals to be served during Fiscal Year 2011 under each priority category within our Order of Selection will be:

Priority Category #1 18,075* * This number includes an estimated 2,700 individuals eligible for Title VI, Part B Supported Employment
Priority Category #2 6,575
Priority Category #3 2,000
Priority Category #4 350
27,000 TOTAL

1. It is estimated that the cost of services for the projected 30,000 individuals will be approximately \$28,000,000 and that the service cost for each priority category within the Order of Selection for the 27,000 individuals served will be:

Priority Category #1 \$19,600,000* * This number includes 1.6 million Title I, Part B funds plus our Title VI, Part B funds to serve individuals eligible for Supported Employment
Priority Category #2 \$ 6,325,000

Priority Category #3 \$ 1,400,000
Priority Category #4 \$ 675,000
\$ 28,000,000 TOTAL

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010) Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
 - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
 - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

The goals and priorities of the Division of Rehabilitation Services for Fiscal Year 2011, as developed and agreed to by the Division of Rehabilitation Services staff and the State Rehabilitation Council, are focused around a strategic plan for the Division of "Think Employment First." The goals and priorities are:

1. Improve the employment-centered focus.

a. Provide services to approximately 30,000 individuals. Services include information and referral for individuals on the waiting list in a closed priority category. As of 4/30/2010, there were 1,815 eligible individuals on the waiting list in closed priority categories.

b. Achieve successful outcomes for at least 1,907 individuals with disabilities. A successful outcome means suitable employment that continues for a minimum of 90 days. (While the Division will continue to strive for the highest number of successful outcomes possible, it has set this minimum goal in accordance with 34 CFR § 361.84(c)(1)(i) Performance Indicator 1.1.)

c. At least 92% of individuals served and closed with successful employment outcomes will be individuals with significant disabilities.

DRAFT 2011

- d. The success rate for individuals determined eligible and receiving services will be at least 56%. Success rate is determined by the number of Status 26 (Rehabilitated Cases) divided by the number of Status 26 plus the number of Status 28 (Non-Rehabilitated Cases).
 - e. Achieve a 96% or higher satisfaction rating for the vocational rehabilitation program as reported by the consumer satisfaction survey program for successful outcome closures.
 - f. Continue to enhance employment success for clients through the following services:
 - i. Supported employment - The Division plans to seek out/help facilitate the development of additional supported employment providers for individuals in areas that currently have limited providers as well as working with and establishing employment networks.
 - ii. Job coaches - Each geographical region continues to develop, maintain, and train a job coach pool that will be available as needed to support clients in their work endeavors. In addition, the Division will partner with other entities to provide additional job coach expertise to VR staff and clients who need customized employment.
2. Implement employment results driven leadership.
- a. Effectively implement the Division's new electronic case management system targeted for implementation July, 2011.
 - b. Finalize the Division's Standards Procedures Directives in support of the Policy Manual and effectively implement them with all staff.
 - c. Effectively communicate the strategic plan throughout the organization using TACE to measure the success of the Division's efforts.
 - d. Assure that all projects align with the Division's "Think Employment First" philosophy, using TACE's technical assistance to assure the philosophy is assimilated throughout the organization.
3. Implement training at all levels to achieve increased employment outcomes.
- a. Effectively train all staff for the implementation and utilization of the Division's new electronic case management system to improve productivity and employment outcomes.
 - b. Implement the Division's new training unit to provide effective training at the local level. The unit is to be staffed by 4 program specialists located across the state.
 - c. Implement counselor training providing an on-boarding process, training and mentoring for new staff and skills reinforcement for existing staff. The training will focus on, but not be limited to client intake; vocational exploration, guidance, and counseling; employment plan development; and caseload management.
 - d. Implement supervisory training for new and existing supervisors focusing on "Think Employment First" and developing/reinforcing key skills including supervisory skills, caseload management, and critical thinking skills.
 - e. Continue to support and encourage counselors seeking masters degrees in rehabilitation counseling. The Division continues sponsorship of books and other support services for the staff involved in the RSA funded slots for the masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. In addition, the Division will contract with the University of Memphis to develop and deliver courses to staff that have a masters' degree in a related field and only need a few core courses to meet the national and state standard.
 - f. Continue implementation of core course training for all counseling staff including the Division's vision, values, and strategy; people first language; respectful workplace training; and ethics.

DRAFT 2011

g. Provide training opportunities to educate counseling staff concerning ongoing and emerging disability issues including Traumatic Brain Injury, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Psychiatric Disorders, Serving the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Visually Impaired, and Medical Aspects of Disabilities.

h. Continue training for counselors, evaluators and related vocational rehabilitation staff on how effective rehabilitation technology options lead to successful employment outcomes. The Division will continue the contract with the University of Memphis to provide group and one-on-one training for vocational evaluators on making the appropriate recommendations. The Tennessee Technology Access Project Executive Director and his staff will continue their staff training and consultation to ensure staff appropriately considers technology options when working with their clients.

4. Effectively communicate employment focus throughout and outside the Division.

a. The Division will continue to target potentially underserved populations, such as Spanish speaking clients and clients with TBI, autism, deaf-blindness, and mental illness.

b. The Division will target SSA beneficiaries seeking employment by entering into Ticket to Work Partnership Plus projects with community rehabilitation providers. These partnerships will be developed in an effort to provide better follow along services to our clients (funded by SSA milestone payments) which should help them maintain their jobs for a longer period of time.

c. The Division through its partnership with the University of Tennessee Center on Disability and Employment will continue to develop and provide services to employers promoting the hiring of people with disabilities. The Division will also pursue partnerships with major employers to drive employment of its clients. In addition, the Division will continue to participate in and support the expansion of the newly formed Nashville Area Business Leadership Network and other local groups as they develop.

d. Continue to encourage partnerships with transportation providers to expand options for clients to participate in vocational rehabilitation and to secure sustainable transportation for employment, especially in rural areas.

e. Establish community rehabilitation providers in major metropolitan areas of the state for provision of employment services including work adjustment training, job readiness training, job development, and job coaching where adequate local providers cannot be identified.

f. Continue to work collaboratively with the Disability Employment Partners (a partnership that includes the Division, Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD), and the Tennessee Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (DIDS), Disability Law and Advocacy Center, Tennessee Board of Regents, Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, etc.) to expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Tennessee.

g. Continue to work collaboratively with and provide greater technical assistance to the workforce investment programs including career centers. The Division will continue to have counselors housed in each of the primary workforce service delivery areas and will visit all other satellite centers on an itinerant basis.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection

- Identify the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify the justification for the order.
- Identify the service and outcome goals.
- Identify the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

Justification for order of selection

The following Attachment 4.11(c)(3) is based on the funding of Basic Vocational Rehabilitation Grants. The Division received over \$12,000,000 in ARRA Stimulus funds in addition to the basic grant funds. The Division used the ARRA funds to make a substantial further reduction in the existing waiting list, but the one-time funds will not allow the Division to serve all eligible individuals in FY 2011.

On August 1, 2001, the Division of Rehabilitation Services implemented an Order of Selection due to funding limitations that would not allow the Division to provide services to all eligible individuals who apply. The Division will continue to operate under an Order of Selection during Fiscal Year 2011. The Order of Selection has four priority categories and only Priority Category 1 (eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities) remains open. However, we were able to remove all cases that were on the waiting list as of July 15, 2009. Priority Category 2 and 3 remained open until September 2, 2009. In 2008, the Division released 4,579 cases from the waiting list, 6,174 were released in 2009, and 559 have been released to date in 2010. The Division's funds and resources, however, are not adequate to serve all individuals who apply for services. Therefore, execution of the Order of Selection mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, was and is still warranted. The Order of Selection serves as a means of determining which eligible individuals will be served.

The Division monitors services and expenditures on a continuous basis, allowing the Division to manage available funds to assure sustainability of services for cases placed in an open priority category and receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Additionally, adequate funds will continue to be conserved to provide assessment services for all applicants expected to apply throughout the year to determine eligibility and to provide services for those eligible individuals placed in an open priority category within the Order of Selection.

Description of Priority categories

PRIORITY CATEGORY I -- Eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities

PRIORITY CATEGORY II -- Eligible individuals who have significant disabilities

PRIORITY CATEGORY III -- Eligible individuals who do not have significant disabilities and whose vocational rehabilitation is expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services

PRIORITY CATEGORY IV -- Eligible individuals who do not have a significant disability that cannot be classified into a higher priority category

DEFINITIONS

"Most Significant Disability" means the individual meets the criteria for having a significant disability but has a physical or mental impairment that seriously limits two or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome.

"Significant Disability" means the individual meets the three following criteria:

1. The individual has a severe physical or mental impairment which seriously limits at least one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and
2. The individual has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, and end-stage renal disease; or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility, and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation; and
3. The individual's vocational rehabilitation program can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Non-Significant Disability means the individual does not meet the criteria for significant disability or the criteria for most significant disability.

Multiple vocational rehabilitation services mean two or more major vocational rehabilitation services, i.e. physical or mental restoration, training, counseling, guidance and placement. Excluded are support services such as transportation, maintenance, and the routine counseling and guidance that should take place in every case.

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

Currently, the only open Priority Category for the Division is Priority Category 1.

If the Division cannot continue to serve all new Priority Category 1 cases (eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities) who apply, then services will be provided to new PC 1 cases based on the date of application for services. Likewise, should the Division have funding resources to open a closed priority category, but not be able to provide services to all cases currently awaiting services in that category; then services will be provided based on the date of application for vocational rehabilitation services. All waiting list releases have been based on date of application. The releases to date have served all Priority Category 2 cases with application dates prior to October 1, 2009 and all Priority Category 3 and 4 cases with application dates prior to July 15, 2009. The Division's Order of Selection is developed in keeping with 34 CFR § 361.36 of the final regulations.

Service and outcome goals and the time within which the goals will be achieved

The Order of Selection priority categories, justification, outcome and service goals, and time frames are as follows:

PRIORITY CATEGORY I -- Eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities

Justification: Federal law and regulations require that individuals who have the most significant disabilities be selected for services before other eligible individuals with disabilities.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 900 individuals in this priority category. Serve 18,075 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2011.

PRIORITY CATEGORY II -- Eligible individuals who have significant disabilities

Justification: Individuals in this category make up a large portion of the unemployed population with disabilities due to serious limitations of functional capacities and require special consideration in an Order of Selection.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 730 individuals in this priority category. Serve 6,575 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2011.

PRIORITY CATEGORY III -- Eligible individuals who do not have significant disabilities and whose vocational rehabilitation is expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services

Justification: Individuals in this category are the most disabled of the group without significant disabilities due to their expected need for multiple services.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 227 individuals in this priority category. Serve 2,000 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2011.

PRIORITY CATEGORY IV -- Eligible individuals who do not have a significant disability that cannot be classified into a higher priority category

Justification: This is a category to include all other eligible individuals. This category will assure all eligible individuals would receive services if sufficient funds are available to open this category.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 50 individuals in this priority category. Serve 350 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2011.

**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
State Plan Supplement for the State
Supported Employment Services Program
Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for
Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of
Title VI, Part B Funds**

Specify the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

The Division continues to provide supported employment services to eligible clients with the most significant disabilities who have been determined to require on-going support services in order to maintain employment.

Supported employment services are funded through Title VI, Part B funds. As Title VI, Part B funds are depleted, the continuance of the Division's supported employment services is made possible through Title I, Part B funds. The Division anticipates spending in excess of 1.6 million dollars of Title I, Part B funds in addition to its Title VI, Part B funding allotment (projected to be approximately \$503,079 in Fiscal Year 2011).

It is the continued goal of the Division to provide quality supported employment services which are delivered in an effective, efficient and timely manner. Supported employment services are provided through letters of understanding with community rehabilitation providers, and in cooperation with the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services and the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. The community rehabilitation providers must assure that on-going support services will be provided prior to the implementation of supported employment services. The Division has an excellent supported employment program along with training and support activities to ensure the continued provision of quality supported employment services. These programs are ongoing and are not subject to a specific timeline. Two prime examples of these ongoing activities are:

- through contract with the University of Tennessee, the Division funds three supported employment consultants who are charged with the responsibility of working with our many supported employment community rehabilitation providers in providing training and technical assistance to the staff who provide services to our clients. These same consultants also work with the Division staff on an as needed basis to provide SE training and technical assistance to our staff. And
- the Division also involves the regional supervisory staff and quality improvement unit in the monitoring of and consultation to the community rehabilitation providers to ensure appropriate services are being provided to our clients.

The Division plans to continue the funding of the SE consultants activities as well as continue the provision of in-house monitoring of the services provided to the Division's clients by the SE community rehabilitation providers.

The Division will continue to seek community rehabilitation providers to provide supported employment services to under-served disability groups with the most significant disabilities who, because of their disability, have not been able to enter traditional competitive employment or whose

DRAFT 2011

employment is intermittent or interrupted due to a most significant disability. The Division expects to continue increasing employment opportunities for those individuals eligible for supported employment with co-occurring disorders of mental illness and alcohol and drug abuse by expanding more effective partnerships with mental health entities that work with this population and implementing improved services. The Division has a mental health state office field liaison who works with mental health entities and the Division's staff in developing such partnerships where needed and who provides training and technical assistance to the mental health community rehabilitation providers and our staff.

The Division expects to serve in excess of 2,700 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2011 and achieve successful employment outcomes for 375 clients.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies

This attachment should include 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 vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs. See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Act and Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA.)

- Describe the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.
- Identify how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process.
- Describe how assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis.
- Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities.
- Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.
- Identify plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs, if applicable.
- Describe strategies to improve the performance with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators.
- Describe strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
- Describe how the agency's strategies will be used to:
 - achieve the goals and priorities identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1);
 - support innovation and expansion activities; and
 - overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program.

The state plan shall include an assurance that the state will reserve and use a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of our statewide needs assessment and our goals and priorities.

Funds will be utilized in Fiscal Year 2011 for addressing the following priorities that continue to be identified in our needs assessment as they relate to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who need supported employment services; individuals with disabilities who are minorities; individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational

DRAFT 2011

rehabilitation program; and individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system: Education and Training; Employment Opportunities; Information; Support Services; and Counseling and Guidance.

In addition, as the Division continues to release Priority Category 2 cases from the Order of Selection waiting list, more individuals with significant disabilities are able to access vocational rehabilitation services. It is anticipated this activity will lead to improvement in the number of individuals with significant disabilities reaching successful rehabilitation outcome status.

1. Continue the practice of ensuring the availability of appropriate training activities and resources to meet the individualized needs of clients by seeking out and developing partnerships with other private and public entities to provide specialized education and training activities, to include those that can be provided through self-employment and on-the-job-training by employers.
2. Continue the development and expansion of statewide employer groups that focus on inclusion of employees with disabilities in the workforce, such as the Tennessee Business Leadership Network and Southeast Tennessee Employment Consortium.
3. Continue to support expansion of supported employment services by actively seeking out community rehabilitation providers, especially in the more rural areas, that are willing to provide supported employment services to vocational rehabilitation clients with the most significant disabilities; and by fostering partnerships to implement employment network projects with community rehabilitation providers.
4. Continue to increase employment opportunities for clients through development of regional job coach pools; implementation of an on-the-job training initiative; partnering with Disability Employment Partners; targeted marketing and education services to employers; and the provision of additional technical support and expertise to Division staff and clients in the areas of technology, mental health and supported employment issues.
5. Continue to support expansion of Transition School-to-Work services by continuing to work with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in the maintenance of existing partnerships and the creation of additional partnerships to provide vocational rehabilitation services targeted specifically to that LEAs school system; continuing to work with and educate school personnel on the mission and scope of the Division in order to maximize services from both entities to better serve our mutual clientele.
6. Continue improvement in the service delivery of the Division's 17 community rehabilitation centers and the comprehensive rehabilitation center at Smyrna geared directly toward providing services leading to successful employment of individuals with the most significant disabilities. Pursue the development of additional service delivery entities in metropolitan markets for services including vocational evaluation, personal and work adjustment, job development, job placement, and job coaching.
7. Continue support of vocational rehabilitation counselor development by encouraging and supporting vocational rehabilitation counselors to obtain masters degrees in rehabilitation counseling. The Division will pursue all available RSA slots for masters level training available to the Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services through outreach and research. The Division will continue utilization of recruiter staff for recruiting vocational rehabilitation counselors who have a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. Finally, the Division will continue financial support of counselors seeking masters degrees.
8. Continue to implement a marketing/outreach plan that targets and reaches unserved or underserved populations to include all minorities, such as Spanish-speaking clients and clients with traumatic brain injury, autism, deaf-blindness, and mental illness; targets individuals with disabilities who meet our Order of Selection open Priority Category 1 classification; and targets SSA beneficiaries seeking employment.

DRAFT 2011

9. Continue to provide training, via in-house and external avenues, to vocational rehabilitation counselors and supervision to reinforce and encourage the Division's "Think Employment First" strategy.
10. Continue to support the Workforce Investment System by continuing to co-locate vocational rehabilitation counselors in each of the major WIA Service delivery area career centers and ensuring that all career center satellites also have vocational rehabilitation counselors assigned to visit their centers on a regular basis to work with individuals with disabilities that visit each center.
11. Continue to provide cross training to the career center staff in regard to meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. Continue to provide consultation on career center accessibility and accommodation needs in regard to the accessibility needs in the building(s) and accommodations in terms of appropriate technology needed to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities. Continue to partner with the WIA career centers in employment initiatives such as the summer youth employment project.
12. Continue to support the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program and use of other Social Security work incentives that benefit clients by continuing to have Division staff dedicated to the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Programs. These dedicated staff members will provide expert advice to Division field staff, clients and families on the SSA work incentives in regard to educational and work incentives, including how clients can utilize SSA health benefits while in the vocational rehabilitation program and how employment will affect such benefits upon successful employment. Continue to promote the most effective use of Ticket to Work Employment Network programs for the Division and our partners.
13. Continue to increase partnerships with transportation providers to expand options for clients to participate in vocational rehabilitation and to secure sustainable transportation for employment, especially in rural areas; continue to improve communication and partnership among Division and other state agencies, community resource providers, career centers, employers and disability service providers; continue and seek out new partnerships with other agencies that are able to provide those support services not within the funding scope of Division.
14. Continue training for counselors, evaluators and related vocational rehabilitation staff on how effective rehabilitation technology options lead to successful employment outcomes.
15. Continue support of the State Rehabilitation Council. Council members will be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services).
16. Continue support of the Statewide Independent Living Council. Council members will be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services).
17. Continue to submit to the Commissioner an annual report of how funds are utilized relative to innovation and expansion activities.
18. Continue to provide a coordinated, comprehensive and statewide assistive technology delivery system through a network of contracted assistive technology centers. Each of these five centers, strategically located in Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville ensure access to clients from all 95 counties in Tennessee regardless of location. The centers diverse staff includes: Rehabilitation Engineers, Speech and Language Pathologists, Assistive Technologists, Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Therapists and other professionals and provide clients with evaluation, training, device fabrication and follow up services. By providing clients with access to this highly trained and skilled resource, and by purchasing the required devices, clients have the tools that they need throughout their rehabilitation program to assist them in realizing their IPE goals.
19. Implement the electronic case management system to enhance the Division's technological infrastructure and client service capabilities.

**State Plan for the State Vocational
Rehabilitation Services Program
and
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Supported Employment Services Program
Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for
Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)
Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Reports of Progress
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE)
Goals**

Clearly identify all VR program goals consistent with the goals described in the most recently submitted version of Attachment 4.11(c)(1), including an evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of Tennessee's vocational rehabilitation program reflects the following accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2009 as compared to the goals laid out in the Fiscal year 2009 State Plan:

a. Provide services to approximately 31,000 individuals. As of 03/31/2008, there were 7,685 eligible individuals on the waiting list in closed priority categories.

Achievement - The Division served 30,289 individuals in 2009. Most importantly, the Division released 6,174 cases from the waiting list on July 15, 2009 and all priority categories were opened from that date until September 2, 2009.

b. Achieve successful outcomes for at least 2,907 individuals with disabilities.

Achievement - The Division achieved 1,906 successful outcomes in 2009. Achievement of this goal was impeded by a state unemployment rate of 10.5% in 2009, up from 6.7% in 2008. Many rural counties experienced an unemployment rate of between 17% and 22.9%.

c. At least 96% of individuals served and closed with successful employment outcomes will be individuals with significant disabilities.

DRAFT 2011

Achievement - 95.2% of the individuals served and closed successfully in 2009 were people with significant disabilities.

d. The success rate for individuals determined eligible and receiving services will be at least 65%.

Achievement - The success rate for the Division in 2009 was 54.9% as a result of the low number of successful outcomes resulting from the high unemployment rate.

e. Achieve a 96% or higher satisfaction rating for the vocational rehabilitation program as reported by the consumer satisfaction survey program for successful outcome closures.

Achievement - The division achieved a 97.3% satisfaction rating for successful outcome closures in 2009.

2. Identify all supported employment program goals consistent with the goals described in Attachment 4.11(c)(4), including an evaluation of the extent to which the supported employment program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Goal - The Division expects to serve in excess of 3,500 clients through the Supported Employment program during the Fiscal Year 2009 and achieve successful employment outcomes for 600 clients.

Achievement - The Division served 2,722 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2009 and achieved successful employment outcomes for 387 clients. Achievement of the client served goal was driven by statewide training focusing on the proper identification of supported employment cases. Achievement of the outcomes goal was further impeded by a state unemployment rate of 10.5% in 2009, up from 6.7% in 2008 and by a lack of adequate supported employment providers in some markets.

3. Provide an Assessment of the performance of the VR program on the standards and indicators for the most recently completed federal fiscal year.

In 2009, the Division met the primary standards and indicators (1.3-1.5) as well as 1.6. The Division did not meet 1.1 or 1.2.

4. Provide a report on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized in the most recent completed federal fiscal year.

The Division reserved funds allotted to the state under Section 110 to support Innovation and Expansion (I & E) activities in Fiscal Year 2009 as follows:

The funds in 2009 were used to provide enhanced and concentrated services to Transition School to Work students/clients.

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2011 (submitted FY 2010)

Attachment 6.3 Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

- Describe quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Describe the timing of the transition to extended services

The Division continues to provide supported employment services to eligible clients with the most significant disabilities who have been determined to require supported employment services, in accordance with 34 CFR § 361 and 363, in order to obtain and maintain employment.

Supported employment services are funded through Title VI, Part B funds and Title I, Part B funds. Title VI, Part B funding allotment for Fiscal Year 2011 is projected to be approximately \$503,079. The Division anticipates spending in excess of 1.6 million dollars of Title I, Part B funds for supported employment services to supplement the funding received under Title VI, Part B.

It is the continued goal of the Division to provide quality supported employment services which are delivered in an effective, efficient and timely manner. Supported employment services are provided through Letters of Understanding with community rehabilitation providers and in cooperation with both the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (Department of Finance & Administration) and the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. The community rehabilitation providers must assure that on-going support services will be available prior to the provision of supported employment services.

The Division coordinates with other state agencies and the community rehabilitation providers to transition clients receiving supported employment services to extended services. The Tennessee Employment Consortium, an independent association of community rehabilitation providers developed jointly by the Division, the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services, and the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, continues to study transitioning from services provided by the Division to services provided by the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services to develop best practices for transition of services.

The number of supported employment providers has decreased over the past year from 104 to 93

DRAFT 2011

supported employment CRPs. While the number of CRPs remains adequate to serve the Division's decreasing number of supported employment clients, there remains a shortage of CRPs able to provide supported employment services in more rural areas of the state. The Division will continue to enter into Supported Employment agreements with appropriate state agencies, as well as private and/or non-profit agencies which have the capabilities of providing quality service delivery and on-going support services in multiple counties. The Division will assertively seek those agencies that will provide supported employment services to persons being transitioned from institutional settings to the community and to work in competitive, integrated employment settings. The Division will also be studying in-house capabilities to provide supported employment services in more rural areas of the state using Division staff and effective methods to develop natural on-going supports.

The Division will continue to seek community rehabilitation providers to provide supported employment services to under-served disability groups with the most significant disabilities. The Division, in conjunction with the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities has been conducting a pilot program for transitional supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness that began in 2008 and continues to date. Pilot programs are located in each of the three grand Regions of Tennessee. The pilot program has been beneficial in establishing improved supported employment services for individuals with mental illness. The results of the pilot program will be incorporated into the Division's supported employment services statewide in 2011.

The Division will continue to contract for services from the University of Tennessee's Center for Disability and Employment (UT-CDE). These programs will provide continuing technical assistance and training to the Division's staff and contracted community rehabilitation providers to assure competency and compliance.

The UT-CDE program continues to conduct various studies of the components of the Supported Employment program and make recommendations for the improvements based upon these studies.

The Division expects to serve in excess of 2,700 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2011 and achieve successful employment outcomes for 375 clients.

An individual is moved to extended services when the client has reached a point where he/she has achieved maximum performance on the job; has achieved minimum necessary supports on the job; the job is not in jeopardy of ending; and individual is maintaining work performance which is acceptable to employer and client.