

Montana State Rehabilitation Council Disability Rights Montana & Disability Determination Services conference rooms May 23 & 24, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Members present: Monique Casbeer, Barbara Davis, Chanda Hermanson-Dudley (Friday), Coreen Faulkner, Kathy Hampton, Brook Hodge, Michele Letendre, Denise May, Kathy Meier, and Frank Podobnik

Members absent: Tiffany Costa, Wayne Dagel, Andy Kemp, Barbara Kriskovich, and Susan Nielson

Staff and guests: Beverly Berg, Anna Gibbs, Shawn Tulloch, and Beth Brenneman

Welcome and Introductions: Council Vice Chair Brook Hodge called the meeting to order. Introductions were made around the tables.

Training by Cheryl Bates-Harris (on Thursday):

Main Points of Role & Responsibilities of State Rehabilitation Councils

- Composition of the Council
 - Majority must be people with disabilities
- Functions of the Council
 - Reviews, evaluates, and advises the agency on its performance and the effectiveness of services and the employment outcomes
 - Develop and review State goals
 - Conduct state-wide needs assessments of individuals with disabilities every three years
 - Prep State plan
 - Submit annual report to Governor and RSA (available to public)
 - Coordinate activities with other councils such as SILC, advisory panel un IDEA, State Developmental Disabilities Council, state mental health planning council, and State Workforce Investment Board
 - Perform other functions as appropriate according to Title I of Rehab Act.

Main Points of Systemic Issues discussion:

- Systems Advocacy: make effort to improve policies/procedures – all of that which impacts on quality of services
- How to do this?
 - Advise agency of the problem area and suggest improvement
 - Review and comment on regulations, policies, and procedures
 - Several suggestions to fix systemic issues were offered

March Meeting Minutes: Motion made to approve the minutes unanimously.

Public Comments: none

Budget Report, Anna Gibbs: Using the projector, Anna explained the funds for Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services (VRBS). The VRBS FFY 2019 final grant award is \$10,260,220. This results in a Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) set aside of \$1,539,033. The grant match/MOE is \$2,776,908. Please note that this is a decrease to the federal grant from the FFY 2018 award by \$1,533,190. It is unknown at this time if more funds will be awarded as the year progresses. The VRBS program receives program income for reimbursement of VR services provided to clients that are SSI and SSDI eligible. Due to the length of time it took for the program to gain security access to the SSA Portal, the estimated program income for FFY 2019 for SSA reimbursements is decreased to \$665,000. As of April 30, 2019, seven months or 58% of FFY 2019 has been completed (spent \$5,903,158.00). Five months remain in FFY 2019. Federal fiscal year 2019 projections continue to be reviewed and adjusted based on current expenditure data and client services data retrieved from MACS (\$12,219,526.00).

Federal/State updates & Field Services updates, Chanda Hermanson-Dudley: Chanda reported the legislative decisions and impacts: Montana Telecommunication Access Program (MTAP) lost some funds to Mental Health and Extended Employment (which is fully funded now). MTAP also cuts NFB Newslines from their funding. Chanda reported before that out of 15 FTE positions, we got seven back. Still do not have eight returned to us. Provider rate for CRPs and IL Centers has increased. Chanda reported that the RSA team came to MT the first week of April for the RSA Monitoring. They offered technical assistances and feedbacks on different components of the VRBS programs such as Pre-ETS, MACS, and various cases. Chanda also reported on the organization chart showing the filled and vacate positions. She talked briefly about the Pre-ETS Bureau. She reported no fair hearings and appeals in this quarter.

Program Support & Operations, Anna Gibbs: Using overhead projector and handouts, Anna reviewed the Data Dashboards for PY2018 (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019) Quarter 2 which is October-December 2018. The Summary of Education handout shows Measurable Skill Gains earned by VR clients with 91% earned in a Secondary or Postsecondary Education. Page 2 shows Exit Data, with 38.7% Employment rate which the agency would like to have improved to above 40%. The Exit Data handout shows about 85% in competitive and integrated employment. It also shows the different types of exit and reasons for exit. The third handout is Pre-Employment Transition Services showing the number of students with disabilities (5,737), number receiving Pre-ETS (2,534), number receiving Pre-ETS who are potentially eligible (2,466), and those receiving Pre-ETS who applied (68). The handout also shows the percentages with different transition services. The last handout shows the participants in the VR program (race/ethnicity, age, sex, career or training service, WIOA programs, and barriers to employment).

Reports from the Committees

- Education and Membership
 - Focused on filling required (vacate) positions on the Council
 - Tribal
 - PLUK (have a name to contact)
 - SWIB (will contact Shannon Lewis)
 - Contacted NW Energy, 1st Interstate Bank, Town Pump – focused on contacts in charge of people statewide – not getting responses
 - Need to connect with Celina Cline or Mark Mahnke
- Planning & Review
 - Discussed different case stories; will pick a few for the Council to vote at next meeting
 - Categories: blind, general, transition, and tribal
- Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment
 - Working on State Plan which is due in mid-February
 - Discussion on information for August meeting and November meeting
 - 2-year plan; RSA has to approve

- Discussed ways to get people to reply the surveys
- Policy, Procedure, & Personnel Development
 - No new changes; morale is getting better
 - Pre-ETS success

Wrap-up:

- Possible agenda items for the next meeting:
 - Windmills Training
 - Usual staff reports (more details from the Budget report)
 - Time for committees to meet & report
 - One of the VRBS teams update: Business Service Team
 - Pre-ETS presentation (walk through steps with a student, etc.)
- Reminders:
 - Election of Chair & Vice Chair in November
 - All-Staff conference in Lewistown; September 25-27
 - Tentatively planned on SRC meeting in Bozeman for November 7 & 8