

SRC Special Meeting-Order of Selection Consultation

Attendees: Desiree Dean, Chanda Hermanson, Anna Gibbs, Aaron Schultz, Lacey Conzelman, Tammy Hogan, Doug McElroy, Lacey Keller, Eva Belatski, Desiree Johnson, Celina Cline, Corinne Moore, Brian Torcher, Jennifer Owen

1. Order of Selection and Waiting Lists:

- Clients in the process of developing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) may be placed on a waiting list if a category is closed, even if they are near completion.
- Closing categories aims to prevent resource strain but can create unease for staff and clients.

2. Lessons from Past Experiences:

- Overloading the system by rushing clients through the process harms the program and its long-term sustainability.
- Staff are encouraged to manage client intake thoughtfully to avoid overwhelming resources.

3. Focus on Category 1:

- Efforts are being made to keep Category 1 (most significant disabilities) open.
- Specialized service models, such as Individualized Placement Support and Customized Employment, are prioritized to support this group.

4. Cost Containment Measures:

- Hiring freeze: Vacant positions are not being refilled without realizing vacancy savings.
- Transition staff events to virtual events for 2025.
- Elimination of overtime work.
- Cancellation of certain contracts and requests for proposals (RFPs).
- Analysis of caseloads to identify opportunities for utilizing comparable benefits or alternative resources.

5. Budget Challenges:

- Federal grants have been flat-funded for two years, with no cost-of-living adjustments.
- Proposed state amendments could increase provider rates by 3% and an additional 14% for VR providers, potentially adding significant costs.
- Rising costs and flat funding compound financial pressures.

6. Financial Overview (Anna Gibbs):

- Federal grant for 2024: \$13.8 million; state share: \$3.7 million.
- Current budget for 2025: \$8.9 million, with \$4.4 million already spent as of March.
- Uncertainty remains regarding future federal grant awards, though flat funding is anticipated.
- Obligations exceed \$9 million, with liquidation of the \$8 million budget projected by May 22nd.
- Even with a \$13.8 million grant, funds may only last until November, leaving obligations unmet through January.

7. Caseload Size and Sustainability:

- Average caseload size has steadily increased, reaching 122 per staff member.
- Unsustainable levels of participants are evident
- Interactive dashboards provide historical trends and real-time updates on participant numbers and resource strain.

8. Program Integrity:

- Internal controls ensure spending is documented, reasonable, allocable, and necessary.
- No evidence of overspending or misspending has been identified.

9. Formal Consultation and Voting:

- The SRC is requested to formally vote on management's decision to close Categories 2 and 3 to document concurrence.

Roll Call Vote, Do you support VRBS closing categories 2 and 3?

aaron - yes; mcelroy - yes; lacey k - yes; eva b - yes; desiree j - yes; jennifer - yes