
PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
(BLIND)

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan* must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA:

* Sec. 102(b)(D)(iii) of WIOA

A. INPUT OF STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. INPUT PROVIDED BY THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, INCLUDING INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION, AND OTHER COUNCIL REPORTS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS PART OF THE COUNCIL'S FUNCTIONS ;

The Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (Board), the state rehabilitation council for the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI or Division), is in place to advise the Division in accordance with Title IV, Section 105 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The Board advises the Division in the development of the state plan, the Board annual report, review and analysis of consumer satisfaction and other activities including review of policies that impact the expenditure of federal and state funds and the coordination and planning for service delivery to individuals involved in the SBVI vocational rehabilitation program.

The Board represents South Dakota citizens who are blind or visually impaired who can benefit from vocational rehabilitation and independent living services within the state. The Board's mission statement reflects these priorities: "The mission of the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired is to promote independence, employment and full inclusion for all citizens who are blind or visually impaired." All Board agendas are developed by the Board's Executive Committee with the Division Director. Policies are provided to Board members in draft format to offer the opportunity for input prior to finalization. No recommendations by the Board of SBVI were rejected by the Division during the plan period.

The full Board met quarterly during the reporting period, Federal Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017. Meetings were open to the public and held in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act and the State's open meeting law, SDCL, 1—25—1. All meetings were publicized via the state news tips, through newsletters, on the SBVI web site and the State of South Dakota Board Portal.

Annual Report to the Governor and RSA Commissioner

The Board directed staff to draft and complete annual reports for 2016 and 2017. The reports were approved by the full Board prior to submission to the Governor and RSA Commissioner.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Due to reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act through implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), South Dakota Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) and the Board of SBVI addressed priorities contained in the WIOA and obtained input for the state plan updates through a video conference public forum with eleven sites and the option to call in and participate via conference call. Implementation of Title IV of the WIOA was discussed at all Board of SBVI meetings including pre-employment transition services, memorandums of understanding, coordination and strategic planning with the Department of Labor and Regulation, subminimum wage, defining competitive integrated employment, and collaboration with employers.

Updates to the Unified State Plan are based on Board and stakeholder input and data analysis, including labor market trends in the state. Drafts were presented to the Board Strategic Planning

and Policy Committee; due to the short timeline between the Rehabilitation Services Administration's provision of the Technical Assistance Circular addressing two-year modification requirements on January 19th and the deadline for submission of March 15th, it was not feasible to present to the full Board during their quarterly meeting scheduled for March 23, 2018. The full Board was provided the opportunity to review the plan updates prior to submission.

The Board Strategic Plan and Policy Committee met via conference call to review and discuss the revised plan, this provided the opportunity to make recommendations prior to submission.

Modifications to the plan were distributed to all board members for further review and comments. Public forums and disability summits are planned to share information and obtain input on services and needs of citizens with vision loss. Information obtained through public input, coordination with other entities including labor, education and consumer organizations were used to re-evaluate goals and strategies in the state plan. The Board of SBVI recommended sites and formats for the public forums.

The Division agreed with the Board's recommendations related to public meetings including that meetings be held in Rapid City (in conjunction with the National Federation of the Blind State Convention), on a reservation, and a videoconference meeting with multiple sites. Public forums are held annually during the National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota convention. The practice of conducting public meetings in conjunction with other events that bring together people who are blind or visually impaired has worked well; the Division will continue to seek opportunities for this collaboration in the future. In July 2016, a Disability Summit at the Indian Learning Center in Pierre was held with an audience of American Indians with disabilities, sponsored by Oun'iyekiyapi Vocational Rehabilitation Tribal Program.

An event was held Kyle, SD in cooperation with the Oglala Sioux Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Disability Rights South Dakota and the Division of Rehabilitation Services in June of 2017. KILI, the local radio station, conducted live interviews during the event to help educate citizens about programs and services. SBVI staff visited with participants to discuss their concerns and share information on SBVI programs. A videoconference was held with sites in Aberdeen, Brookings, Pierre, Rapid City, Huron, Yankton, Watertown and Sioux Falls.

Board Support for Individuals/Organizations: The Board of SBVI sponsors events that promote employment of citizens with disabilities in conjunction with organizations of the blind and other organizations. The Division of SBVI developed procedures for Board sponsorship based on input from the Board of SBVI.

Governor's Awards for Employment of People with Disabilities: The annual Governor's Awards event is held to recognize individuals, employers and organizations for their contributions to the employment of persons with disabilities. This annual event is a joint effort of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Department of Human Services.

The Division supported the Board's recommendation to assist with the Governor's Awards, and supported attendance by Board members. The Board has a representative who assists in making the award selections along with a committee of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Board of SBVI Public Relations committee drafted nominations to be submitted for recognition in FFY 2017. Two of three nominees were selected for recognition.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Activities National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) activities are planned in communities across South Dakota every year by the Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and SBVI. Local committees of agency staff and stakeholders meet to plan activities across the state during the month of October to raise awareness of the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In addition to a financial contribution towards the budget for the events, the Board of SBVI partners with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation in reviewing and approving proposals for local NDEAM events.

The Division endorsed the Board's involvement in planning and supporting NDEAM activities in 2016 and 2017.

White Cane Awareness Day: The Board voted unanimously to support a white cane education activity in Sioux Falls in FFY 2016 and 2017. A march and presentations by law enforcement and citizens who were blind resulted in public awareness for those in attendance as well as those who experienced the event through extensive news coverage on local television stations.

The Division supported the Boards sponsorship of the White Cane Day activities by assisting with costs for sign language interpreters (2016) and digital billboards (2017).

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF): YLF was held in June 2016 and 2017 in Aberdeen with 40 + students in attendance each year. Several participants were blind. YLF makes a significant impact in the students' lives through interaction with peer mentors and activities that teach self-advocacy skills.

The Division agreed with the Board's recommendation to support the annual Youth Leadership Forum for participation of transition age students with vision loss.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Event Sponsorship: The Board agreed to help sponsor an ADA event in Sioux Falls in 2016. The ADA picnic included speakers and education about employment for citizens with disabilities. Local media covered the event.

The Division agreed with the Boards support of the ADA event.

Competitive Integrated Employment Policy: A draft policy was shared with the Board, due to changes in the definition of competitive employment as a result of WIOA. The Board had the opportunity to review the draft policy and provide input prior to finalization of the policy. The Board unanimously approved this policy.

VR Program- Consumer Satisfaction: The survey was conducted in FFY 2016 and 2017. Results of the survey were reported to the Board of SBVI and included in the Board's annual report. The Board approved using the SBVI Client Satisfaction Questionnaire-8 (CSQ-8) survey to obtain input. The survey consists of eight core questions and an additional seven questions that were developed with input from the Board of SBVI. A summary of survey results are included with goals and strategies section of the state plan.

Board Representation at Consumer Organization Conventions: The Board of SBVI has made the commitment to support the attendance of clients and representatives of the Board each year at state conventions of consumer organizations including National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota and South Dakota Association of the Blind.

The Division supported the Board's recommendation for Board member representation at consumer organization conventions. The Division also supported the recommendation that stipends be provided to first time attendees at the conventions. Board and public meetings are held in conjunction with consumer organization conventions when possible.

Transition Services for Youth who are blind or Visually Impaired: The Board of SBVI supported development of a brochure to target youth, educators and family members about vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services. The brochure was shared with all school districts in South Dakota in addition to being provided to numerous other entities.

Transition Week at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) is an annual summer youth program for high school students with vision loss from around South Dakota. The objective is to build skills and confidence through work and community involvement. During the summer of 2016 and 2017 high school students attended to learn about employment and post-secondary options. Board members are invited to serve as mentors to the students by participating in activities and presenting.

The Board of SBVI Annual Report: SBVI staff teamed up with the Board of SBVI to complete and submit the Board's annual report on the status of SBVI programs in 2016 and 2017. The board has been instrumental in designing an annual report that is accessible and that provides valuable information to readers concerning SBVI programs and Board activities.

The Board annual report was completed and submitted within timelines mandated by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The Division incorporated all of the Board's recommendations into the final reports.

Board Participation in Comprehensive System of Personnel Development Results from annual training needs assessments and evaluations are shared with members of the Board and their input is sought on activities to address the needs identified. Board members are invited to participate in conferences and training activities sponsored by the Division.

Public Access to Meetings and Materials: The State of South Dakota has codified law to address public meeting requirements including that the meetings be open to the public and materials be available to the public. All SBVI Board meetings are held in locations accessible to individuals with disabilities and sign language interpreters or other accommodations are available upon request. Meetings are announced through the State of South Dakota news system for state government. In addition meeting dates and locations are announced in newsletters, on the SBVI web site and agendas are posted at SBVI offices. Agendas, minutes and Board membership, the Board annual report and other information are available through the SBVI website and on the State of South Dakota Board and Commission Portal. The goal of the portal is to make the boards and commissions more open and transparent. Information is provided in the alternative formats.

2. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL'S INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS; AND

The Division of SBVI accepted all input and recommendations from the Board of SBVI.

3. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT'S EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTING ANY OF THE COUNCIL'S INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

No input or recommendations were rejected.

I. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT; DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.10) Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

1. DATA SYSTEM ON PERSONNEL AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

A. QUALIFIED PERSONNEL NEEDS.

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. the number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

Currently, SBVI employs seven vocational rehabilitation counselors who serve citizens with vision loss statewide and one vocational rehabilitation counselor who works primarily at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. A total of 564 people were served during FFY 2017, a substantial increase from 509 in FFY 2016; 97% were reported to have significant disabilities in FFY 2017, a slight decrease from 99% in FFY 2016. Caseloads, territories, and customer service are reviewed periodically to determine the best utilization of existing staff and to determine future ratios to best meet the needs of the people receiving vocational rehabilitation services. For FFY 2017, the ratio of counselors compared to the applicants and eligible people receiving services is an average of 87 clients per caseload. The remaining active caseload as of 10/01/2017 was an average of 49 active clients per caseload. The changes in the caseload size are typically impacted by the changes in the economy and unemployment rates. It is the goal of the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired to remain under the ratio of 1:60 active clients per counselor. The Division evaluates the need for a position in a specific location before replacing an employee when a vacancy occurs. Counselors who serve sparsely populated areas cover large territories and serve fewer clients due to demographics of a large sparsely populated state. Those with larger caseloads work in urban areas with higher population which results in less travel to deliver services.

ii. the number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

Total positions FFY 2017 FTE:

Administrative = 4

VR Counselors = 7

Rehab Center Rehabilitation Teachers = 6

Rehab Center Rehabilitation Manager = 1

Rehab Center Rehabilitation Counselor = 1

Rehab Center Program Specialists = 2

Rehab Center Clerical Support = 2

Total = 23

Current vacancies = 0

iii. projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services 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 following illustrates the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, and includes projected vacancies in the next 5 years. The 9 projected vacancies indicated below are for personnel who are expected to retire.

Type of Position	Total Positions	Current Vacancies	5 year projected vacancies
Administration	4.0	0	Retirement 1.0
Counselors	8.0	0	Retirement 3.0
Support Staff	2.0	0	Retirement 1.0
Rehabilitation Teachers	5.0	0	Retirement 3.0
Rehabilitation Center Administration	3.0	0	Retirement 1.0

B. PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. a list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

South Dakota State University is the only institution of higher education in South Dakota that provides degrees in vocational rehabilitation (bachelors and masters).

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has implemented procedures and activities to ensure staff receive training so they are able to deliver quality services to citizens with vision loss and to ensure the Division has an adequate supply of qualified professionals and paraprofessionals. The Assistant Director of SBVI is the designated training officer for the Division; this position works with the DRS training officer and other SBVI and DRS staff to coordinate activities related to the comprehensive system of personnel development.

Data System on Qualified Personnel Needs The system to collect and analyze data related to qualified personnel needs and personnel development consists of two components. The South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) maintains a database of all training activities attended by Division staff including BHR sponsored training, seminars, workshops, conferences, and undergraduate and graduate level courses supported by the Division. Individual district offices maintain files on educational backgrounds, training activities and goals and plans of employees to meet the agency requirements for qualified rehabilitation professionals and Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). Supervisors are required to address training needs as a part of the annual employee evaluation. Individual training needs are reported to the training officer to be considered in the analysis of results from the annual training needs assessment. This analysis assists with prioritizing future training.

The Division has a web-based management information system (VR FACES) which includes a CSPD module for tracking employee training and education. This system also tracks whether Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are certified by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) or their development plan to work toward CRC status. Input of information is required of individual employees and/or supervisors with access to all information by the Training

Officer and other management staff. This system is efficient for addressing individual training needs as well as for projecting future personnel and training priorities. Staff progress toward meeting CSPD requirements is also tracked by the VR FACES system.

The Division is committed to assisting vocational rehabilitation counselors with obtaining the necessary academic training and professional experience to meet the standards of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. During FFY 2017, one employee of the Division was pursuing a master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation through South Dakota State University. One other counselor is pursuing a master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation through Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and one counselor has achieved a Master's degree but has not taken the CRC exam. The remaining Counselors have achieved senior counselor status and have CRC certification.

ii. the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

Fifteen students were enrolled in the South Dakota State University (SDSU) master's vocational rehabilitation counseling program in spring 2017, with 15 enrolled with RSA funds. Five students graduated in May 2017 and all were sponsored by RSA funds.

iii. 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.

During FFY 2016, four students graduated from SDSU Masters in VR program and all were on the RSA funding. During FFY 2017, five students graduated from SDSU Masters in VR program and all were on the RSA funding. Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired recently hired one of their graduated students.

Newly hired rehabilitation counselors are encouraged to pursue a master's degree and become Certified Rehabilitation Counselors if they have not already obtained that certification. The Division will support costs associated with pursuit of master's degrees. Funds for supporting employees' pursuit of master's level degrees consist of RSA grants, and program 110 funds. Senior rehabilitation counselors are certified through the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor process. The priority for filling counselor vacancies is a master's degree and CRC certification. Eligibility for CRC certification (already possesses a master's degree but no certification) is the next preferred option. Due to lower starting salaries compared to most surrounding states, it is necessary to hire individuals with bachelor's degrees for entry-level counselor positions and encourage them to become qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors within a specific time period.

2. PLAN FOR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION AND RETENTION OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL

Describe the development 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.

Recruitment of qualified staff is accomplished by announcing positions through professional

organization such as the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) and RehabACTion, the state Bureau of Human Resources web site and by advertising in the state's newspapers. Job announcements are also shared with the Board of SBVI and the state Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, as well as professional and client organizations, such as blind consumer organizations, South Dakota RehabACTion and South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.

Retention and advancement are accomplished through the opportunity for rehabilitation counselors to participate in the masters level vocational rehabilitation education programs, and obtain CRCC certification. Once they meet the requirements, they can be promoted to a Senior Counselor. Senior rehabilitation counselors are also encouraged to apply for management and administrative positions when vacancies occur.

Training opportunities are available through a variety of organizations to assist SBVI in preparing staff to deliver training and to retrain in priority areas for vocational rehabilitation service provision. ACVREP provides training in blindness specific topics; this training leads to professional certification in vision rehabilitation, orientation and mobility, and low vision therapy. Agency sponsored training through seminars, conferences, and video conferences on topics such as: Empowering Adults to Learn Technology; Low Vision training (pre-biopic and biopic/telescopic training; Vocational Resources training; Telecommunication and Employment; Diabetes education; Understanding Personality Disorders; Ethical Decision Making; Soft Skills Training; Bridging High School to Post Secondary; Understanding the Seriousness of Meth & Identifying Users; Customized Job Development, and Mental Health Techniques; Encouraging Open and Positive Conversations; Understanding Guardianship; Establishing Boundaries; Interest Based Negotiation Techniques; Autonomy through Technology; Crossing the Bridge from Workshops to Work Places; Navigating People out of Poverty.

Web based training is also available for a variety of topics including: Ethics Topics specific to blindness and low vision; Supported Employment – Person Centered Planning; Job Development, Job Placement and Job Coaching Strategies; Labor Market Information; Disability specific topics; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); Working with offenders; Department of Labor and Department of Education Webinars

Training opportunities related to the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are sponsored and attended by a variety of participants from state departments and public and private entities.

To address the priority of recruiting individuals with disabilities, the South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources has in rule that any applicant who meets minimum requirements for employment who has been certified to have a significant disability by a rehabilitation counselor will be interviewed for the position, commonly referred to as disability preference. This ensures that individuals who have disabilities have the opportunity to interview and compete for openings in the designated state unit and other programs in state government. Efforts to recruit individuals from minority backgrounds include announcing positions through the State Department of Labor and Regulation and the state's Native American Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Job announcements are available to individuals residing on Tribal lands and the state's Reservations. It is the policy of the Department to provide equal opportunity employment to all employees and applicants for employment. No person working at the Department's facilities is to be discriminated against in employment because of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability.

SBVI anticipates the need to recruit three counselors in the next five-year period based on personnel turnover trends and data on those eligible for retirement in this time period. South Dakota State University (SDSU) offers a master's of science in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling. SDSU started their master's program in the fall of 2005, and their first student received a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling in the fall of 2007. Recruitment of qualified staff is accomplished through promoting job announcements at SDSU in addition to other universities in Region VIII with master's level programs. SBVI has a cooperative agreement with SDSU to provide internship opportunities, participate on their advisory council, and to recruit qualified candidates. SBVI provides paid internship opportunities for students pursuing their master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Division also offers internship opportunities for students with other related degrees when appropriate.

The University of Northern Colorado, Montana State University and Utah State University are other sources for recruitment of graduates with master's level degrees in vocational rehabilitation counseling. In addition, South Dakota universities offer accredited programs with master's degrees in counseling. Graduates of these programs are recruited for vocational rehabilitation counselor openings. They are hired and trained to prepare for the CRCC to meet the highest qualifications in the state for rehabilitation counselors.

SBVI has a high percentage of staff with disabilities (1/4). Reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure employees with disabilities have access to the latest technology to perform their jobs. Staff who are blind are provided drivers as a reasonable accommodation.

3. PERSONNEL STANDARDS

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) and 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. STANDARDS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH ANY NATIONAL OR STATE-APPROVED OR -RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION, LICENSING, REGISTRATION, OR OTHER COMPARABLE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO THE PROFESSION OR DISCIPLINE IN WHICH SUCH PERSONNEL ARE PROVIDING VR SERVICES; AND

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has implemented procedures and activities to ensure staff receive training so they are able to deliver quality services to citizens with vision loss and to ensure the Division has an adequate supply of qualified professionals and paraprofessionals. The Assistant Director of SBVI is the designated training officer for the Division; this position works with the DRS training officer and other SBVI and DRS staff to coordinate activities related to the comprehensive system of personnel development.

Working in conjunction with the Bureau of Human Resources, the Division has established minimum state standards for secretarial, rehabilitation counselors, senior rehabilitation counselors and program administrator positions. These standards are reviewed periodically in light of changing personnel needs, labor market supply and training resources. These are generic job classifications within the state Bureau of Human Resources system. The Division does establish specific education and work experience requirements in order for individuals to enter these positions.

Since South Dakota is a small state, there are several one of a kind staff positions. Each year in the personnel performance evaluation process, SBVI identifies the professional development needs of these staff. Each employee's immediate supervisor monitors individualized staff development plans. National certification standards are used for the Orientation and Mobility Specialists and the Low Vision Therapist through the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP). The Assistive Technology Specialist attends regional and national training to keep up to date on the latest advances in technology. In addition, staff members hold certifications for Deaf-Blind services from Helen Keller National Center; Traumatic Brain Injury, Braille and assistive technology through training and various accrediting organizations.

Newly hired rehabilitation counselors that possess only a bachelor degree are encouraged to pursue a master's degree and senior rehabilitation counselor status. The Division will support costs associated with pursuit of master's degrees.

Funds for supporting employees' pursuit of master's level degrees consist of RSA grants and program 110 funds. Senior rehabilitation counselors are certified through the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor process. The priority for filling counselor vacancies is a master's degree and CRC certification. Eligibility for CRC certification (already possesses a master's degree but no certification) is the next preferred option. Due to lower starting salaries compared to most surrounding states, it is necessary to hire individuals with bachelor's degrees for entry-level counselor positions and encourage them to become qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors within eight years. The following illustrates the completion date anticipated for counselors in the next five years: Hire date in 2017; target date to complete CSPD standards by 2025; – hire date in 2018; target date to complete CSPD standards by 2026; – hire date in 2019; target date to complete CSPD standards by 2027; and hire date in 2020; target date to complete CSPD standards by 2028.

Leadership and management training and assignments with senior level management teams assist counselors to prepare for supervisory and administrative positions. Senior rehabilitation counselors are encouraged to apply for management and administrative positions when there are vacancies.

The Rehabilitation Act as amended and the Vocational Rehabilitation regulations refer to "Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors". SBVI has the following definitions in place to address qualified rehabilitation counselors employed by the Division:

All Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

- a. meet the standards for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor;
- b. meet the standards for Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor but are not CRC certified;
- c. meet the standards for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor;
- d. have been employed by the Division for a minimum of six months; and
- e. have an approved plan to be eligible to take the CRC certification test by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) within eight years.

Employees who are not qualified rehabilitation counselors receive oversight and monitoring by a

CRC certified supervisor and mentoring by senior counselors for non–delegated functions of the VR process. Counselors who meet the requirements to become certified through the CRCC are considered qualified counselors. However, to be eligible for a promotion to senior counselor, counselors are required to be certified by the CRCC. Five of the eight SBVI counselors are CRC certified. Two counselors are taking master’s level coursework through SDSU and VCU, and are in an approved plan for pursuing CRC certification. One counselor has her master’s degree but has not pursued obtaining her CRC certification.

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(7)(B)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, TO ENSURE THAT THE PERSONNEL HAVE A 21ST CENTURY UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLVING LABOR FORCE AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Cooperation with other entities in state government such as the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR), the Department of Health, and the Department of Education ensures that training opportunities are available which address topics relevant to the field of rehabilitation. In addition, Division staff members provide training concerning considerations when working with individuals with disabilities to DLR employees. Division staff members have various opportunities to attend intensive trainings at little or no cost. These conferences and/or seminars are also an opportunity to collaborate with other entities who deliver services to individuals with disabilities. DLR employees provide training on labor market trends, economic development opportunities, business engagement and other information. Training on labor market information is also conducted on line via the Labor Market Information (LMI) e–Learning Series. This five–part video series provides information on how LMI can be a useful resource for local offices, workforce development professionals, policy makers, business owners, program or economic development planners, etc. The modules are based on a benchmark PowerPoint version provided by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration (ETA). Leadership development and capacity building are addressed through distance learning courses as well as agency sponsored training sessions. Assistive technology training is available through DakotaLink, the state’s assistive technology project, the SBVI Assistive Technology Specialist, and other nationally–recognized entities via web based training. The State Bureau of Information and Technology and Bureau of Human Resources provide assistive technology training for employees with disabilities who utilize assistive technology on the job.

Annual training conferences address current research by contracting with national Rehabilitation Research and Training and Technical Assistance programs to address specific topics identified in the annual training needs assessment. In addition, information is disseminated from RSA updates and Technical Assistance Circulars to ensure SBVI staff are cognizant of the latest trends in vocational rehabilitation.

SBVI works with the state’s Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Projects to provide training to staff on cultural diversity. Ongoing training is provided to address informed choice as it relates to agency policies and practices. A statewide cultural awareness training is being planned for spring or summer 2018 for VR counselors and other staff within the Department of Human Services. The State Rehabilitation Council has recommended strategies that have been implemented for addressing informed choice in service delivery and training that addresses the evolving labor force and needs of people with disabilities.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101 (a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. SYSTEM OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

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, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

The Division is committed to assisting vocational rehabilitation counselors with obtaining the necessary academic training and professional experience to meet the standards of a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. During FFY 2016 one employee of the Division was pursuing a master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation through Virginia Commonwealth University, and FFY 2017, one new employee of the Division was also pursuing a master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation through South Dakota State University

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has approached personnel development through a number of avenues. Each employee's current level of education and training, as well as short term and long term training needs are tracked by supervisors who evaluate methods for addressing these needs at least annually through the Accountability and Competency Evaluation (ACE). Individual training needs assessments are conducted to evaluate current levels of education, understanding of fundamentals of vocational rehabilitation, blindness and disability-related issues, professional development and related topics. Self-evaluation, supervisor input and recommendation sections on the ACE assist in assessing needs for training which may be pursued through a number of approaches. The results of the assessments are recorded for individuals, groups of related positions (i.e. rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation teachers, supervisors, managers, clerical, etc.) and for the agency as a whole. The ACE system allows for ongoing feedback between employees and supervisors by incorporating a self-audit while addressing professionalism, work quality and areas for development as well as areas of strength. Training needs are addressed utilizing a form that not only identifies needed training, but also includes fields for the date the training is scheduled and the date it is attended. BHR workshops are identified under the following headings: supervisory, job enrichment, and technology with other training and job-specific skills also included in the document used to track training needs and attendance. The training officer works to identify resources for obtaining training in areas related to vocational rehabilitation (including the Rehabilitation Act Amendments and priorities in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and RSA regulations), including serving citizens with the most significant disabilities and those from minority backgrounds. Responses from satisfaction surveys and input from the Board of SBVI are also methods utilized to identify training needs.

Paraprofessional staff offered ongoing training in word processing and other software applications as well as office-related courses such as effective writing, customer service and organization skills through the BHR. Courses specific to the vocational rehabilitation case management information system and other topics specific to vocational rehabilitation are offered through in-service training sessions, usually taught by agency specialty staff.

SBVI works closely with DakotaLink, the state's assistive technology project funded, in part, through section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. DakotaLink provide hands on training on assistive technology in group settings and on an individual basis. The DakotaLink Coordinator

of Technical Services is a member of the Board of SBVI and serves on the Assistive Technology Committee for the Division of SBVI. Rehabilitation Counselors also are required to attend training at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, including training on assistive technology. One DakotaLink Tech that specializes in blindness is housed in the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and is available to assist with assistive technology needs of clients and staff. The SBVI Assistive Technology Instructor is available for technical assistance and training statewide via video conferencing, Skype and Face Time in addition to onsite training.

B. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION OF SIGNIFICANT KNOWLEDGE

procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

Annual training conferences address current research through contracting with national Rehabilitation Research and Training and Technical Assistance programs to address specific topics identified in the annual training needs assessment. In addition, information is disseminated from RSA updates and Technical Assistance Circulars to ensure SBVI staff are cognizant of the latest trends in vocational rehabilitation. Monthly video conferences address relevant topics in a timely manner.

Training on IDEA and transition services for students with disabilities is coordinated with the State Division of Special Education and the Transition Services Liaison Project. The annual Youth Leadership Forum is planned in collaboration with the Special Education Program, Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Transition Project. The annual Fall Conferences is a combined effort with the Department of Education Special Education Program, Department of Labor and Regulation, other Divisions within the Department of Human Services and other entities to offer training on transition and pre-employment transition service options.

Training needs of the state's Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, Centers for Independent Living, the Client Assistance Program and community rehabilitation programs are considered in planning training activities within the division.

Training needs are addressed through a variety of resources. Other resources accessed by staff to meet their individual training needs include: workshops, conferences and seminars hosted by other government organizations such as Special Education, Department of Labor and Regulation and the Bureau of Human Resources. Professional organizations (SD RehabACTion, Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, etc.) regularly work with the training officer to prioritize topics relevant to employment of people with disabilities and base workshops or conference sessions on the training needs assessment conducted by the Division. Consumer organizations (SD Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, SD Association of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind of SD, and the SD Association of the Deaf) are examples of sponsors of training. Distance learning activities provide a cost-effective method for participation in training on a number of topics pertinent to RSA priorities. Independent study and mentoring by supervisors and senior rehabilitation counselors are other means for meeting individual staff development needs.

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

Sign language interpreters are available for all training sessions for participants with hearing loss as well as for those who are deaf/blind. Braille, materials in electronic format and enlarged print are provided to all staff or clients who request alternative formats. The Division has developed fee schedules and vendors to address the need for interpreters of foreign languages and Native American languages including Lakota, Nakota and Dakota dialects.

6. COORDINATION OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

As appropriate, 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 Act.

Training on IDEA and transition services for students with disabilities is coordinated with the State Division of Special Education and the Transition Services Liaison Project. The annual Youth Leadership Forum is planned in collaboration with the Special Education Program, Rehabilitation Services, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Transition Services Liaison Project. The annual Fall Conferences are a combined effort with the Department of Education, Special Education Program, Department of Labor and Regulation and other entities to offer training on transition and pre–employment transition service options. In addition, SBVI works with the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to address needs of students with vision loss on a statewide basis.

K. ANNUAL ESTIMATES

(Formerly known as Attachment 4.11(b)). Describe:

1. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE STATE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES;

According to the 2016 Cornell University Disability Status Report there are approximately 11,300 South Dakota citizens with a visual disability between the ages of 16 and 74. Approximately 2,800 or 33% of people between the ages of 21 to 64 are working full time/full year employment. For the same age group of 21 to 64, South Dakota citizens with visual disabilities had the second highest employment rate in the nation of working-age people with visual disabilities at 64.8%. In FFY 2018, it is estimated that 525 eligible citizens will be served.

2. THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL RECEIVE SERVICES UNDER:

A. THE VR PROGRAM;

To assist the Statewide Workforce System in developing the needs determination section of the State Unified Plan, SBVI provides all partners the statewide estimates of individuals who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and supported employment services and the costs for services provided as planning and programming data as part of the SBVI state plan update. These annual estimates are reported to the State Workforce Development Council as part of partner planning for addressing service needs statewide to include services to citizens with disabilities. Public vocational rehabilitation is represented on statewide workgroups that address service delivery and capacity among workforce partners including local needs of the one-stop centers across the state. The number of individuals eligible for services in the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has ranged from 200 to 220 over the past several years. In FY 2017, SBVI provided services to 509 people with 244 people found eligible for services during that year. During FY 2018, the Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) estimates based on data from prior years and service projections that a total of 525 eligible citizens will receive services. A slight increase is projected for 2019 with an estimate of 530 eligible citizens who will receive services.

B. THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; AND

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired will not be receiving funds for Title VI Part B Supported Employment funds. Supported employment services will be provided utilizing Title I, Part B Vocational Rehabilitation funds.

C. EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY, IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION;

N/A

3. THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VR SERVICES, BUT ARE NOT RECEIVING SUCH SERVICES DUE TO AN ORDER OF SELECTION; AND

SBVI is currently able to provide services to all people eligible for the vocational rehabilitation program.

4. THE COST OF SERVICES FOR THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS ESTIMATED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES. IF UNDER AN ORDER OF SELECTION, IDENTIFY THE COST OF SERVICES FOR EACH PRIORITY C A T E G O R Y .

In FFY 2018, for Title I, Part B Vocational Rehabilitation, a total of 525 eligible citizens will be served at a case service cost of \$1,372,858.

It is estimated that 530 eligible citizens will be served in FFY 2019 at a case service cost of \$1,385,932.00.

M. ORDER OF SELECTION

Describe:

1. WHETHER THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL IMPLEMENT AND ORDER OF SELECTION. IF SO, DESCRIBE:

A. THE ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TO BE PROVIDED VR SERVICES.

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired is able to serve all eligible individuals and is not on an order of selection.

B. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER.

N/A

C. THE SERVICE AND OUTCOME GOALS.

D. THE TIME WITHIN WHICH THESE GOALS MAY BE ACHIEVED FOR INDIVIDUALS IN EACH PRIORITY CATEGORY WITHIN THE ORDER .

N/A

E. HOW INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES ARE SELECTED FOR SERVICES BEFORE ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AND

N/A

2. IF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT HAS ELECTED TO SERVE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF ANY ESTABLISHED ORDER OF SELECTION, WHO REQUIRE SPECIFIC SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT.

N/A

O. STATE'S STRATEGIES

Describe the 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 VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

1. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Prepare job seekers to make informed decisions about career pathways based on demand and labor market information. Provide staff training and continuing education in areas of need that are specific to blindness or visual impairment including assistive technology and alternative skills of blindness. Work with businesses to determine opportunities available to job seekers with vision loss.

2. HOW A BROAD RANGE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES WILL BE PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE REHABILITATION PROCESS AND ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

SBVI will expand assistive technology training resources to improve accessibility for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including those with the most significant disabilities. Assistive technology services and devices will be available throughout the rehabilitation process through SBVI vocational rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation teachers or private providers. These services are available on a statewide basis.

3. THE OUTREACH PROCEDURES THAT WILL BE USED TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE MINORITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM.

Plan and participate in activities that target businesses to educate them on the capabilities of people who are blind or visually impaired. Annually conduct two or more activities that promote services available for citizens with vision loss including those from minority backgrounds. Annually review and update outreach materials and procedures that staff utilize to promote services to referral sources, employers and other entities. Ensure that outreach methods address the needs of those with the most significant disabilities. Maintain regular contact with minority service agencies to increase awareness of services that are available. Collaborate with Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation and other programs to ensure that all services are provided in an effective and efficient manner while addressing cultural diversity. Provide SBVI staff with resources and training so they are able to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of diverse populations. Strengthen extended services to assure successful employment for clients with the most significant disabilities.

4. THE METHODS TO BE USED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSITION OF SUCH STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY LIFE (INCLUDING THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES, POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES).

Continue transition activities and services including: Project Skills, Project Search, Youth Leadership Forum, SBVI Transition Week, and the Transition Services Liaison Project that provide students with pre–employment transition services. Provide summer pre-ETS activities in communities statewide through agreements with local providers. Strengthen mentoring opportunities between students and adults who are blind or visually impaired. Collaborate with the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and public schools to improve access to pre–employment transition services. Through a coordinated effort of systems, prepare youth with the knowledge, skills and ability to become economically self– sufficient. Educate teachers, students and family members about the services available through SBVI and other workforce partners. Increase the provision of independent living and social skills training to ensure clients and youth have the skills required to obtain employment.

5. IF APPLICABLE, PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING, DEVELOPING, OR IMPROVING COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS WITHIN THE STATE .

Increase utilization of South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind to improve skills of clients of SBVI, including alternative techniques and vocational services. Improve the quality of job development services by SBVI staff providing specialty training on employment and vision loss to providers and businesses. Access is provided to SSI/ SSDI benefits specialist's services and training to assist individuals with significant disabilities to manage their benefits while participating in employment.

6. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE WITH RESPECT TO THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

Performance accountability measures will be addressed in the Board of SBVI annual report and future goals and strategies will be developed to address performance measures once data is available for the performance accountability measures as stipulated in section 116 of WIOA.

7. STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Educate staff and clients on programs and services offered through other entities including the Department of Labor and Regulation, the South Dakota Department of Education and other public and private entities including the Veteran's Administration. Educate teachers, students and family members about the services available through SBVI and other workforce partners. SBVI will serve as a resource on accommodations for citizens with vision loss to other components of the statewide workforce system.

8. HOW THE AGENCY'S STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO:

A. ACHIEVE GOALS AND PRIORITIES BY THE STATE, CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT;

The Division of SBVI will work with the Board of SBVI to measure and report progress on goals and priorities, including those needs identified in the statewide needs assessment.

B. SUPPORT INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES; AND

Utilization of Innovation and Expansion Funds Section 101 (a) (18) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended requires the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to reserve and use a portion of the funds for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, with an emphasis on services to individuals with the most significant disabilities; and to support the funding of the State Rehabilitation Council (Board of SBVI).

The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired has reserved funds for utilization in innovation and expansion activities. These funds will be used for the following activities: Support the costs of the Board of SBVI. This includes staff costs (drivers), accommodations and other direct costs involved in Board activities. Support initiatives approved by the Board of SBVI 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 the statewide assessment, monitoring activities conducted under Section 107 and goals and priorities of the State. Areas of emphasis include the provision of assistive technology services and devices, services for students and youth with disabilities, improving community rehabilitation programs, working with businesses and employers to achieve and optimize employment opportunities and outcomes for individuals served by SBVI in conjunction with other core partners in the workforce system. Performance accountability measures will be addressed in the Board of SBVI annual report and future goals and strategies will be developed to address performance measures once data is available for the performance accountability measures as stipulated section 116 of WIOA.

C. OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS RELATING TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE VR SERVICES PROGRAM AND THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM.

SBVI will address any barriers to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

P. EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS: VR AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT GOALS

Describe:

1. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VR PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE APPROVED VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR THE MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED PROGRAM

YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. IDENTIFY THE STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS.

Goal 1: Improve the earnings, benefits, and career advancement for consumers served by SBVI.

Strategy 1.1: Increase utilization of South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) to improve skills of consumers served, including alternative techniques and vocational services: Program participation for SDRC services were provided to 354 participants in FY 16 and 323 participants in FY 17. SDRC implemented new approaches for assistive technology training to address the demand for this service resulting in an increase in participation of services.

Strategy 1.2: Improve the quality of job development services to SBVI consumers by providing specialty training on blindness and visual impairments to providers: SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors perform job development in instances that their expertise in blindness and visual impairments is critical. Training on service provision to citizens with vision loss is provided by counselors to providers including resources available to clients with vision loss. Training is available at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind free of charge to providers. In addition, the Division provides training on topics related to accommodations for clients with vision loss as part of seminars and conferences to providers along with staff of SBVI.

Strategy 1.3: Increase the use of SSI/SSDI benefits specialist services and training to assist individuals with significant disabilities to manage their benefits: Counselors substantially increased referrals for benefits specialist services from previous years to 42 client referrals in FY 16, but decreased to 14 client referrals in FY 17. Counselors continue to work closely with Benefit Specialists and promote their services with clients who are on SSI/SSDI.

Strategy 1.4: Provide annual training in areas of need that are specific to blindness or visual impairment including assistive technology (AT): In 2016-2017 the following training sessions were provided to SBVI staff: Empowering Adults to Learn Technology; Low Vision training (pre-biopic and biopic/telescopic training; Diabetes education; and Autonomy through Technology. Staff utilizes the AT Specialist at the SD Rehabilitation Center for training regarding specific topics related to assistive technology. In addition, DakotaLink provides hands on training on assistive technology in group settings and on an individual basis. The DakotaLink Coordinator of Technical Services is a member of the Board of SBVI and serves on the Assistive Technology Committee for the Board. Rehabilitation Counselors also are required to attend training at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, including training on assistive technology.

Strategy 1.5: Exceed performance levels established for the Performance Indicators under Evaluation Standard 1– Employment Outcomes (established in 34 CFR Sec. 361.84(c)(1) of the Federal Regulations): SBVI has consistently exceeded performance levels for all six Standard 1 Performance Indicators including in FY 2016 & FY 2017.

Fiscal Year 2016 Performance

509 people were served through the SBVI VR Program during Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (FY 16) compared to 517 people in 2015 (FY 15).

115 people were successfully rehabilitated through the vocational rehabilitation program. Of the people who were closed successfully, 99% had significant disabilities.

The average hourly wage was \$13.17 for people who obtained and/or maintained employment through the vocational rehabilitation program.

Fiscal Year 2017 Performance

564 people were served through the SBVI VR Program during Federal Fiscal Year 2017 (FFY 17), compared to 509 people in 2016 (FFY 16).

147 people were successfully rehabilitated through the vocational rehabilitation program in FFY 17, a substantial increase from 115 successfully rehabilitated VR clients in FFY 16.

The average hourly wage was \$13.18 for people who obtained and/or maintained employment through the vocational rehabilitation program.

FFY 2017 marks the ninth year that SBVI has partnered with the Board of SBVI to conduct a consumer satisfaction survey using the SBVI Client Satisfaction Questionnaire–8 (CSQ–8) survey. The survey consists of eight core questions and an additional seven questions that were developed with the help of the Board of SBVI.

In 2016, the survey was sent to 136 people who received services and were closed from the SBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program during the past year. Sixty surveys were returned for a response rate of forty-four percent which represents an increase from a forty-two percent response rate in FFY 2015. The overall consumer satisfaction mean was very high at 29.27 out of a possible 32, with a standard deviation of 4.45. Survey participants were asked directly “In an overall, general sense, how satisfied are you with the service you received?” Ninety-three percent of survey participants indicated they were very satisfied with the service they received from SBVI.

In FFY 2017, the survey was mailed out to 204 people who received services and were closed from the SBVI vocational rehabilitation program during the past fiscal year. Of 204 questionnaires mailed out, 93 were returned, which is a 46 percent response rate. The overall client satisfaction mean continues to be very high, at 29.78 out of a possible score of 32, with a standard deviation of 4.46. Demographics of the survey indicated the respondents were predominantly Caucasian, but it does reflect a movement in the direction of greater ethnic diversity in the response group.

Performance levels will be re-evaluated once baseline performance measures are in place.

Goal 2: Develop outreach methods so that referral sources, employers, and citizens who are blind or visually impaired are aware of the unique services provided by SBVI.

Strategy 2.1: Design and disseminate outreach materials and participate in activities that target employers to educate them on the capabilities of people who are blind or visually impaired: Staff prioritized outreach efforts to educate businesses, schools, providers and the general public on services available from SBVI. Staff report on their efforts on a monthly basis and this is a performance expectation on their annual appraisal reviews. A system for tracking has been implemented so metrics can be analyzed in the future.

Strategy 2.2: Annually conduct two or more activities that promote services for citizens with vision loss including those from minority backgrounds: SBVI participated in State and Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program biannual meetings for information sharing and to identify and address specific needs and concerns SBVI participated in the National Disability Awareness Month events hosted by the Oun'yekiyapi Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in Eagle Butte in 2016 and 2017. SBVI participated in a Disability Summit at the Indian Learning Center in Pierre in

July 2016 sponsored by Oun'yekiyapi Vocational Rehabilitation Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

A listening session was held in Kyle, South Dakota on June 2, 2017 in conjunction with the Oglala Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Disability Rights South Dakota and the Division of Rehabilitation Services. KILI, the local radio station, conducted live interviews during the event to help educate citizens about programs and services. SBVI staff visited with participants to discuss their concerns and share information on SBVI programs.

Strategy 2.3: Provide annual training and materials for staff to train them to market services to targeted audiences: Outreach materials were developed and disseminated to staff with instructions for marketing services to target audiences including employers, service providers, schools and a number of other entities. In 2017 SBVI staff visited 70 pharmacies for Medication Safety Awareness Week. This opportunity allowed staff to educate about options to provide access to medication instructions for people with vision loss while promoting capabilities of citizens with vision loss.

Strategy 2.4: Annually review and update outreach materials and procedures that staff utilize to promote services to referral sources, employers and other entities: Outreach materials were reviewed and a Native American radio ad was aired on two Tribal radio stations in 2017. The Board of SBVI public relations committee participated in recommending materials and training methodologies including new brochures targeting transition age youth.

Goal 3: Ensure that Vocational Rehabilitation consumers receive services that allow for informed choice and help them to improve their ability to communicate, interact, and perform to their potential in their community.

Strategy 3.1: Develop assistive technology training resources to improve accessibility for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including those with most significant disabilities: The Board of SBVI Assistive Technology Advisory Committee reviews the assistive technology resource guide annually. This information is disseminated to those served by SBVI and is available on the Division web site. The Assistive Technology (AT) Specialist at the South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind has implemented training options including designated times for walk-in or call in technical assistance and training. The SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind hosts "First Fridays" each month offering seminars on a variety of topics including AT training. The Assistive Technology Access Project covers costs for up to five hours of training from DakotaLink, the state assistive technology project. This allows current and former clients to get assistance as technology changes and new options for access become available.

Strategy 3.2: Increase the provision of independent living and social skills training when necessary to VR consumers to ensure that they have the skills necessary to obtain employment: The SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind incorporates independent living and social skills into the curriculum for those who participate in training including youth with vision loss who attend Transition Week. SBVI Rehabilitation Teachers provide hands-on training to assist clients to overcome barriers by learning alternative techniques to increase their confidence and independence. Field Rehabilitation Teachers provide services in the home and the workplace on a statewide basis.

Strategy 3.3: Promote access to programs and services in the statewide workforce investment system: SBVI works with the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) through a memorandum of understanding that outlines roles and responsibilities of vocational rehabilitation and other programs

in the state workforce investment system. Quarterly meetings were held with SBVI managers and managers from DLR to discuss and implement strategies for further collaboration. Training is conducted for audiences at the annual vocational rehabilitation conference to offer the opportunity for the audience to learn about DLR services.

Strategy 3.4: Serve at least 5 individuals in Supported Employment to ensure services are comprehensive and have long term supports: Training has been provided to SBVI staff on supported employment strategies, motivational interviewing and person centered planning which resulted in counselors providing supported employment services and identifying long terms supports for 9 SBVI clients in FY 2016 and FY 2017. With lack of Supported Employment funds, SBVI continues to provide services to those clients with most significant disabilities through regular VR funding.

Goal 4: Strengthen the agency's ability to provide quality services to the ever-changing minority populations that exist in South Dakota.

Strategy 4.1: Maintain regular contact with Native American Nations and minority service agencies to increase awareness of services that are available: In FY 2016 and 2017, SBVI joined the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Directors of the five Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs in meetings designed to continue the positive strides that have been made over the past years in coordinating services and promoting the employment of Native American citizens who are blind or visually impaired. SBVI also has had an informational booth each year at the Lakota Nation Invitational basketball tournament held in Rapid City which is a forum for information dissemination to all of the state Tribes.

Strategy 4.2: Collaborate with tribal VR programs to ensure that all eligible individuals are served in an effective and efficient manner on reservations and tribal lands: SBVI utilizes the cooperative agreements that are in place with Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Programs as a guide when coordinating services on reservations and tribal lands. SBVI worked closely with the Oglala American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Program during a lapse in their federal funding to assure continued services for Native Americans with disabilities on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Staff traveled to provide a weekly staff presence in the Kyle and Pine Ridge offices located on the pine Ridge Reservation to educate people on State VR services and take applications for those interested in services.

Strategy 4.3: Provide bi-annual training to agency staff to provide tools for meeting the cultural and linguistic needs of culturally diverse populations: Training to address cultural and linguistic needs of diverse populations was delivered through collaboration with local agencies and the Tribal VR Programs. Training to address cultural awareness for the state's Native American population is being planned for all staff in the Department of Human Services (the Designated State Agency) in 2018.

Goal 5: Provide quality transition services to eligible students that facilitate the students' movement from school to post-secondary education and/or employment and results in successful employment.

Strategy 5.1: Continue transition activities and services, such as Project Skills, Project Search, the Youth Leadership Forum, Catch the Wave, and SBVI Transition Week, which provide students with valuable experience and skills needed to move from school to employment: For transition age clients with vision loss, transition activities and services were provided to 74 clients in FFY 2016 and increased to 90 clients in FFY 2017.

Strategy 5.2: Develop additional mentoring opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired: Mentoring activities were planned in conjunction with Transition Week at the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind through participation of SBVI Board members in transition and job exploration activities. SBVI staff who are blind or visually impaired serve as mentors for citizens with recent loss of vision.

Strategy 5.3: Collaborate with the SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Transition Specialist to provide statewide education to teachers, students and family members about services available to students through SBVI. SBVI collaborates and provides oversight to ensure that enhanced VR services, including pre-employment transition services, are being provided to SBVI transition age youth. The SBVI Assistant Director serves on the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Advisory Council.

B. DESCRIBE THE FACTORS THAT IMPEDED THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES.

All goals were achieved in FY 2016 and FY 2017, and all strategies contributed to achieving the goals are outlined. There were no factors that impeded the achievement of goals.

2. AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM GOALS DESCRIBED IN THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPLEMENT FOR THE MOST RECENT PROGRAM YEAR WERE ACHIEVED. THE EVALUATION MUST:

A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals. (Blind)

SBVI is committed to ensuring that rehabilitation services are made available on a statewide basis to individuals with the most significant disabilities who have not traditionally been competitively employed or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent. SBVI does not receive a supported employment Title VI Part B allotment. Instead, Title I vocational rehabilitation funds are authorized to providers of the client's choice; the amount of funds authorized is based upon the individual's needs, type of placement, hours, and type of employment.

B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities. (Blind)

All goals were achieved in FY 2016 and FY 2017 and all strategies contributed to achieving the goals are outlined. There were no factors that impeded the achievement of goals.

3. THE VR PROGRAM'S PERFORMANCE ON THE PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATORS UNDER SECTION 116 OF WIOA.

The State Unified Plan requires partner agencies to describe actions that will be taken if performance falls short of expectations. The Rehabilitation Act provides remedies and plans for state agencies that do not achieve required performance standards. The Division of SBVI achieved all goals and strategies described in the FFY 2016 and 2017 state plan update. SBVI exceeds all standards and indicators in the Rehabilitation Act based on an evaluation of progress implemented to improve the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and a Quality Assurance Plan is in place to address performance through a variety of activities on an ongoing basis.

Performance outcomes of both vocational rehabilitation programs in South Dakota (general and blind) are summarized for and discussed with the Workforce Development Council in addition to the state rehabilitation councils (Board of SBVI and Board of Vocational Rehabilitation).

Performance measures will be evaluated once there is adequate data available to implement the WIOA mandated measures.

Standard 2: The ratio of the percent of individuals with a minority background to the percent of individuals without a minority background exiting the program who received VR services.

Indicator 2.1: Minority Background Service Rate– SBVI served less than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds so cannot apply the performance level of .80 prescribed by RSA. According to the 2010 census, South Dakota's minority (non-white) population was 14.1%. The largest minority group in South Dakota involves American Indians from nine South Dakota Tribes making up approximately 9% (8.8% – 2010 U.S. Census) of the state's total population.

In FY 2016, 15% of SBVI closures were comprised of individuals of American Indian descent, an increase of 3% from last year, and 21% of all closures reported coming from a minority background, which exceeds census data for minorities for the population of the state.

In FY 2017, 19% of SBVI closures were comprised of individuals of American Indian descent, an increase of 4% from 2016, and 28% of all closures reported coming from a minority background, which exceeds census data for minorities in the population of the state. SBVI has increased services to minority clients by 12.4% in the past four years.

Baseline measures have not been developed to address performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA.

4. HOW THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION (I&E) ACTIVITIES WERE UTILIZED.

The Rehabilitation Act requires that a portion of funds be reserved for innovation and expansion activities. The Division of SBVI works with the Board to prioritize these activities. The Board of SBVI utilizes the Division senior secretary for support of Board activities due to the limited resources available for personnel. Activities supported by the Board of SBVI in FY2016 and 2017 were as follows: 1: Costs associated with Board Member attendance at quarterly meetings; 2: Public Meeting promotion and facilitation (to gather input on the need to expand services, especially for individuals with the most significant disabilities); 3: Consumer Satisfaction Surveys; 4: Joint activities with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council; 5: National Disability Employment Awareness Month Activities; 6: Workshop registration and travel expenses for Board Members attendance at agency training, RSA sponsored training, and consumer conventions;

7: Education and outreach to promote the capabilities of citizens with vision loss and service offered by SBVI; 8: Workshop registration and travel expenses for consumers' attendance at state conventions of consumer organizations; 9: Other activities approved by the Board of SBVI to address agency goals and strategies.

Board members participate in prioritizing innovation and expansion activities which impact citizens who are blind or visually impaired. Innovation and expansion funds are used in accordance with priorities in the Rehabilitation Act as amended.

CERTIFICATIONS

Name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate **South Dakota
Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Name of designated State agency **South Dakota Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Gloria Pearson**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Cabinet Secretary, Department of Human Services**

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The **designated State agency or designated State unit (as appropriate) listed above** is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA*, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.** Yes
2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the **designated State agency listed above** agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan; Yes
3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan*, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;** Yes
4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; Yes
5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement. Yes
6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law. Yes
7. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement; Yes

8. The **Authorized Representative listed above** has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services; Yes

9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. Yes

FOOTNOTES

Certification 1 Footnotes

* Public Law 113-128.

** Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

Certification 2 Footnotes

* All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

** No funds under title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

*** Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76,77,79,81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3485; and the State VR Services Program regulations.

Certification 3 Footnotes

* No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

** Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in *** under Certification 2 footnotes

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE STATE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements the undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form- LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **South Dakota Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Gloria Pearson**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Cabinet Secretary**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to MAT_OCTAE@ed.gov

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING — SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

STATEMENT FOR LOAN GUARANTEES AND LOAN INSURANCE

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **South Dakota Department of Human Services**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Gloria Pearson**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Cabinet Secretary**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>).

ASSURANCES

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. SUBMISSION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT:

The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:

A. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY AND DESIGNATED STATE UNIT, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EITHER A STATE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OR STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(21) OF THE

REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable **(B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council**

C. CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(16)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

D. THE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION BY THE STATE, OR IF THE STATE SO ELECTS, BY THE STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE THE AMOUNT OF THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE OF THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE VR PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(3).

E. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds **No**

F. THE SHARED FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION OF JOINT PROGRAMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(2)(A)(II) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

The designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs: **No**

G. STATEWIDENESS AND WAIVERS OF STATEWIDENESS REQUIREMENTS, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(4) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan. **Yes**

H. THE DESCRIPTIONS FOR COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(11) AND (24)(B); AND 606(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. ALL REQUIRED METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(6) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

J. THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT, AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 101(A)(7) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

K. THE COMPILATION AND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMISSIONER OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS, ESTIMATES, STATE GOALS AND PRIORITIES, STRATEGIES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND AS REQUIRED BY SECTIONS 101(A)(15), 105(C)(2), AND 606(B)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

L. THE RESERVATION AND USE OF A PORTION OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TO THE STATE UNDER SECTION 110 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH

DISABILITIES, PARTICULARLY INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES.

M. THE SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VR SERVICES:

The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

A. COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 101(A)(5)(D) AND (20) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. IMPOSE NO DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT AS PART OF DETERMINING AN INDIVIDUAL'S ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES OR THAT EXCLUDES FROM SERVICES UNDER THE PLAN ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO IS PRESENT IN THE STATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(12) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT .

C. PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES LISTED IN SECTION 103(A) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AS APPROPRIATE, TO ALL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE STATE WHO APPLY FOR SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(5) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT?

Agency will provide the full range of services described above **Yes**

D. DETERMINE WHETHER COMPARABLE SERVICES AND BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(8) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

E. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

F. COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE PROVISIONS OF INFORMED CHOICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 102(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

G. PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO AMERICAN INDIANS WHO ARE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES RESIDING IN THE STATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 101(A)(13) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

H. COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SEMIANNUAL OR ANNUAL REVIEWS, AS APPROPRIATE, FOR INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED EITHER IN AN EXTENDED EMPLOYMENT SETTING IN A COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM OR ANY OTHER EMPLOYMENT UNDER SECTION 14(C) OF THE FAIR

LABOR STANDARDS ACT OF 1938, AS REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(14) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

I. MEET THE REQUIREMENTS IN SECTIONS 101(A)(17) AND 103(B)(2) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT IF THE STATE ELECTS TO CONSTRUCT, UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

J. WITH RESPECT TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, THE STATE,

I. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT,

A. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN THE ASSESSMENTS; AND

B. STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE, TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS; AND

II. HAS DEVELOPED AND WILL IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO PROVIDE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES (SECTIONS 101(A)(15) AND 101(A)(25)).

5. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION FOR THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT TITLE VI SUPPLEMENT:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT ASSURES THAT IT WILL INCLUDE IN THE VR SERVICES PORTION OF THE UNIFIED OR COMBINED STATE PLAN ALL INFORMATION REQUIRED BY SECTION 606 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL SUBMIT REPORTS IN SUCH FORM AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUCH PROCEDURES AS THE COMMISSIONER MAY REQUIRE AND COLLECTS THE INFORMATION REQUIRED BY SECTION 101(A)(10) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT SEPARATELY FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER TITLE I AND INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

C. THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT WILL COORDINATE ACTIVITIES WITH ANY OTHER STATE AGENCY THAT IS FUNCTIONING AS AN EMPLOYMENT NETWORK UNDER THE TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 1148 OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

6. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL EXPEND NO MORE THAN 2.5 PERCENT OF THE STATE'S ALLOTMENT UNDER TITLE VI FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF CARRYING OUT THIS PROGRAM; AND, THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY OR AGENCIES WILL PROVIDE, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THROUGH PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITIES, NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN AN AMOUNT THAT IS NOT LESS THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE

COSTS OF CARRYING OUT SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDED TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES WITH THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR SUCH PURPOSE UNDER SECTION 603(D) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 606(B)(7)(G) AND (H) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL USE FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE UNDER TITLE VI OF THE REHABILITATION ACT ONLY TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING EXTENDED SERVICES TO YOUTH WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SUCH SERVICES; AND, THAT SUCH FUNDS ARE USED ONLY TO SUPPLEMENT AND NOT SUPPLANT THE FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, WHEN PROVIDING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES SPECIFIED IN THE INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 606(B)(7)(A) AND (D), OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

7. PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES:

A. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT IT WILL PROVIDE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AS DEFINED IN SECTION 7(39) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

B. THE DESIGNATED STATE AGENCY ASSURES THAT:

- I. THE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES CONDUCTED UNDER SECTION 102(B)(1) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT AND FUNDED UNDER TITLE I OF THE REHABILITATION ACT INCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AS AN APPROPRIATE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 606(B)(7)(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT
- II. AN INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 102(B) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT, WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND UPDATED WITH TITLE I FUNDS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 102(B)(3)(F) AND 606(B)(6)(C) AND (E) OF THE REHABILITATION ACT.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE ASSURANCES FROM THE STATE

VII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR COMBINED STATE PLAN PARTNER PROGRAMS

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, Youth Program, Wagner-Peyser Act Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program—and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program.* If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II and III of that document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program (available on www.regulations.gov for public comment). The requirements that a State must address for any of the partner programs it includes in its Combined State Plan are provided in this separate supplemental document. The Departments are not seeking comments on these program-specific requirements, which exist under separate OMB control numbers and do not represent requirements under WIOA. For further details on this overall collection, access the Federal rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting Docket ID number ETA-2015-0006.

* States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) and 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

APPENDIX 1. PERFORMANCE GOALS FOR THE CORE PROGRAMS

Include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability indicators based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA.

Instructions: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

TABLE 1. EMPLOYMENT (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	60.00	72.90	62.00	72.90
Dislocated Workers	63.00	84.30	64.00	84.30
Youth	47.00	72.00	49.00	72.00
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	61.00	58.20	63.00	58.20
Vocational Rehabilitation</	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 1

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT (FOURTH QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	56.00	72.00	58.00	72.00
Dislocated Workers	59.00	84.00	60.00	84.00
Youth	45.00	69.70	46.00	69.70
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	84.00	61.40	84.00	61.40
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 2

TABLE 3. MEDIAN EARNINGS (SECOND QUARTER AFTER EXIT)

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	5,100.00	4,389.00	5,200.00	4,389.00
Dislocated Workers	6,300.00	6,544.00	6,400.00	6,544.00
Youth	2,500.00	Baseline	2,600.00	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	5,000.00	4,600.00	5,200.00	4,600.00
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 3

TABLE 4. CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT RATE

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	25.00	63.30	25.00	63.30
Dislocated Workers	20.00	75.90	20.00	75.90
Youth	30.00	42.50	30.00	42.50
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 4

TABLE 5. MEASUREABLE SKILL GAINS

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	39.00	40.00	40.00	41.00
Wagner-Peyser	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 5

TABLE 6. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Program	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level
Adults	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Dislocated Workers	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Youth	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Adult Education	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Wagner-Peyser	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Vocational Rehabilitation	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

User remarks on Table 6

TABLE 7. COMBINED FEDERAL PARTNER MEASURES

Measure	PY 2016 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2016 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level	PY 2017 Proposed/ Expected Level	PY 2017 Negotiated/ Adjusted Level

User remarks on Table 7

APPENDIX 2. OTHER STATE ATTACHMENTS (OPTIONAL)
