

Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council

Full Council Meeting Agenda

August 8, 2024
9:00 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Microsoft Teams Meeting

[Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 272 211 152 132 Passcode: 3UE9xY

To join by phone only, call (608) 571-2209 Phone Conference ID: 504 907 039#

9:00 – 9:15

Roll Call and Introductions
Announcements
Quorum Check
Approval of Minutes – May 2024

9:15 – 9:45

Committee Updates and Committee Member Approvals:

- Council Engagement Committee
- Performance Measures and Quality Assurance Committee
- Policy Review and Administration Committee
- Services to Business Committee
- Executive Committee

9:45 – 10:15

CAP Report

Jen Espinoza Forlenza, Disability Rights Wisconsin

10:15 – 10:30

Break

10:30 – 11:15

Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services Overview (Pre-ETS)

Amy May, DVR WDA 3 Director

Allison Gordon, DVR Deputy Administrator

11:15 – 12:15

DVR Administrative Update

Meredith Dressel, DVR Administrator

12:15 – 12:45

Lunch Break

12:45 – 1:00

Public Comment

1:00 – 1:30

Project SEARCH Update

Deanna Krell, DVR Bureau of Management Services Director

1:30 – 2:15

WIOA and CIE Overview

Sarah Kuehn, Program and Policy Analyst

2:15 – 2:30

Review Action Items and Identify Future Agenda Topics

2:30

Adjourn

*Public comment is limited to the time listed on the agenda. Comments can be sent at any time to: DVRWIRehabCouncil@dwd.wisconsin.gov.

*Comments sent to that e-mail box will be read to the full council at the next meeting unless a specific subcommittee is listed. If a specific subcommittee is listed, comments will be sent directly to them and reviewed at their next committee meeting.

A Statement of Mission

The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council, working on behalf of Wisconsin residents with disabilities, will review, analyze, and advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) regarding the performance of its responsibilities in providing quality services to persons with disabilities.

The Client Assistance Program

Update to Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council

3rd Quarter 2024

Jen Espinoza Forlenza

August 8th, 2024

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The Client Assistance Program

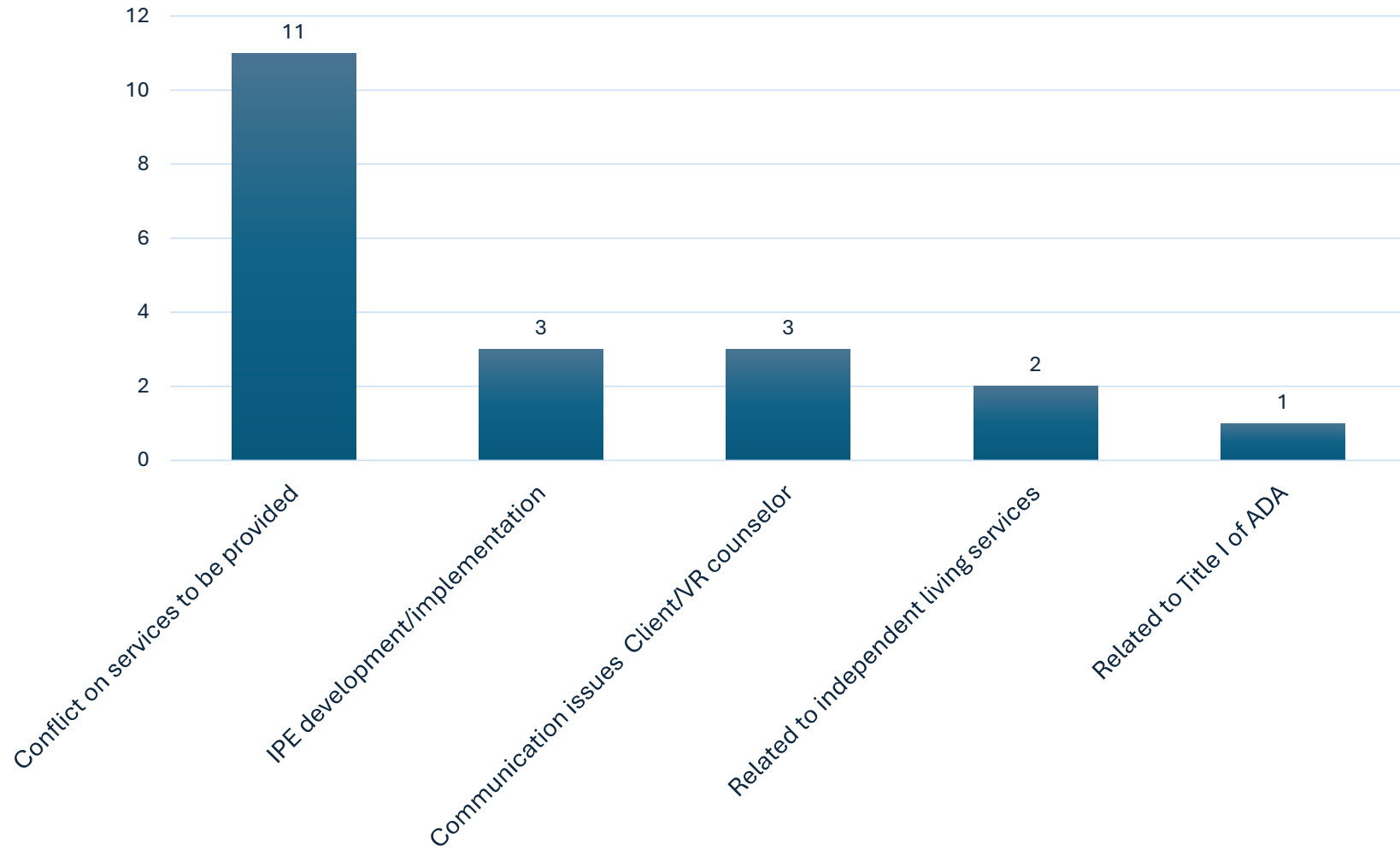
Services from April 1, 2024-June 30th, 2024 (3Q)

Requests for Assistance	31
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<i>Information and Referrals</i>	11
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<i>Open Service Requests</i>	20
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Service Requests by Problem Areas N = 20



The Client Assistance Program Service Details

Case specific:

- Two informal review meetings both involving request for Training Grants
 - One resulted in an informal resolution
 - One resulted in consumer considering appeal options and being advised of timel
- Systems:
 - Reviewing Consumer Rights statements for the DVR and ILC network
 - Reviewing the CAP role for ILC core services
 - Comments on Self Employment Toolkit 3.0 Policy

QUESTIONS

Thank you!

jenniferf@drwi.org

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Department of Workforce Development

Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR Quarterly Update

ALLISON GORDON

DVR Bureau of Consumer
Services Director

DEANNA KRELL

DVR Bureau of Management
Services Director

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Program Year (PY) 2023 Outcomes

For cases closed **07/01/2023 – 06/30/2024**:

PY 2023 Closures	All Cases	All SE Cases	All Non-SE Cases
Total Successful Closures	3,071	659	2,412
Average Wages Earned Per Week	\$440	\$181	\$511
Average Wage Per Hour	\$16.15	\$12.28	\$17.20
Average Hours Worked Per Week	24	14	27
Private Insurance	1,040	138	902



Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) DVR Budget

- FFY 2023 budget reflects final federal award and applicable state match.
- FFY 2024 budget reflects available federal award and applicable state match through

FFY	TOTAL Budget	TOTAL Spending
2022	\$84,248,222	\$84,248,222
2023 to date	\$89,605,936	\$89,605,936
2024 to date	\$89,605,936	\$53,745,998

**Data current as of 7/31/2024. Budget for 2024 includes all applicable state match. State GPR match funding has not changed during the reporting period.*



Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

Total Purchased Expenses FFY24: **\$4,527,361**

WDA	Consumers	Expenses
1	215	\$454,628
2	313	\$785,267
3	432	\$1,393,719
4	355	\$999,291
5	281	\$925,701
6	223	\$832,587

WDA	Consumers	Expenses
7	65	\$151,083
8	287	\$954,301
9	146	\$354,625
10	347	\$1,099,674
11	116	\$319,417

**Data current as of July 7, 2024*



RSA Negotiated Measures

Indicator	PY2023 Actual	PY2023 Negotiated	PY2024 Negotiated Level	PY2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	55.4%	53%	57.1%	57.4%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	54.6%	50.8%	54.9%	55.1%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3,587	\$3,300	\$3,537	\$3,645
Credential Attainment Rate	40.8%	33%	41.0%	41.5%
Measurable Skill Gains*	58.6%	50.8%	61.5%	62.0%

* Staff have until July 31 to enter MSG data.



Existing Business Employment & Wage Assessments

April 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

	Referral for EWA*	EWA Met Min. Wage	EWA Did Not Meet Min. Wage	EWA in Process	Debt/Asset Ratio Requested**	Debt/Asset Ratio Passed	Debt/Asset Ratio in Process
Farm	15	2	7	6	7	6	1
Non-Farm	4	1	0	3	0	0	0
Total	19	3	7	9	7	6	1



Existing Business Case Closures

April 1, 2024- June 30, 2024

	26 Closed Rehabilitated	28 Closed Not Rehabilitated (After IPE Initiated)	Average Total Cost Per Case
Farm	4	0	\$56,129.80
Non-Farm	2	2	\$3,550.49
Total	6	2	\$29,840.14



Assistive Technology Fee Schedule Exception Requests

April 1, 2024- June 30, 2024

	Exceptions Requested	Total Amount Requested	Exceptions Approved	Total Amount Approved
Farm	12	\$ 346,181.38	12	\$336,181.38
Non-Farm	1	\$ 8,349.82	1	\$8,349.82
Total	13	\$ 354,531.20	13	\$344,531.20



Top Things Happening in DVR

- Self-Employment Toolkit revisions
- Statewide service provider report updates
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment
- Policy re-organization
- Update on Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) grants
- Employee Engagement survey
- Stay interviews



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Policy Academy

- Met in July 2024
- Start Your Business Toolkit document review
- IRIS form letter review
- Training Grant IRIS portal review
- End of Program Year performance review



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Quality Assurance

- Met in August 2024
- Currently working on review of IPE development following “back to basics” training in 2022
- Compiling results and writing reports from peer review



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

START

- Met in May 2024
- Discussed youth summer programs
- Middle/8th grade referrals
- How to use the responses from the school survey - discussed statewide conference session ideas



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

AsTec

- Last met June 12, 2024
- Caption Tablet Demo with Laura Plummer from DHS
- Presentation from the Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired (OBVI) with Doug Martens - Rehabilitation Specialist
 - Reviewed OBVI services, population they work with and cross refer/collaboration with DVR
- Reviewed New Technology, Apps, and Products
- Reviewed AT Council Updates



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

SenseAbility

- Last met June 11, 2024
- Caption Tablet Demo with Laura Plummer from DHS
- Discussed resources and information learned at the 2024 HLAA Conference
- Reviewed BEP Updates
- Discussed Lions Camp Vendor Fair in Rosholt



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Workplace Wellness

- Met in-person last month in Stevens Point
- Intent of in-person meeting is to do team building with teammates and develop/experience wellness activities to bring back to WDAs
- Did ice breakers, teaming activity, breathwork/body movement, financial presentation for state employees and found object collage



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Employee Resource Group

Has not met recently pending membership decision on goals and focus of the group.



DVR Staff Trainings Update

May 2024: AIVR/DVR Tribal AODA training; WIOA Wednesday – Value of Collaboration; Comprehensive New Staff Training

June 2024: No Formal Statewide Training

July 2024: Fundamental Counseling and Customer Service Skills; Navigating Roles and Responsibilities: A Framework for WDAs (Case Management vs. Vocational Counseling); WIOA Wednesday with Wisconsin Works and TANF; WTCS and DVR Collaboration Training; Assistive Technology Training (Laura Plummer)

August 2024: Training Grant Process Review



New Mediation Requests 04/01/24 – 06/30/24

DVR received **three** mediation requests:

- One was denied by DVR
- One is active and pending
- One was resolved



New Appeals Requests 04/01/24 – 06/30/24

DVR received **one** appeals request:

- An open case with a decision rendered



Appeal Hearing Outcomes FFY 2024

Ten Total Appeals:

- **Three** decisions rendered
- **One** rehearing denied
- **Two** withdrawn by consumers
- **Two** DVR motion to dismiss granted
- **Two** resolved by parties



DVR Senior Leadership Team Visits Update

- Meredith, Deanna, Allison, and Anna are attending one local DVR meeting in all 11 WDAs
- Seven visits have occurred
- Themes that we have heard from the WDAs:
 - Increased workload
 - Service provider capacity and quality
 - VRS/VRC roles
 - Training



Questions?



Contact Us

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Wisconsin Project SEARCH

Paige Parr

**Statewide Project SEARCH Coordinator
Department of Vocational Rehabilitation**



History

- Program began in 1996 at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC)
- Developed to meet entry-level employment needs at CCHMC, support their Diversity Initiative, and partner with schools and community services agencies



Wisconsin Project SEARCH Sites

- Andis Company
- Aurora BayCare
- Ascension Mercy Hospital
- Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital
- Aspirus Riverview Hospital
- Aspirus Wausau
- Bellin/HSHS St. Vincent
- Childrens of Wisconsin
- Essentia Hospital
- Froedtert Hospital
- Gundersen Health
- Kalahari Resort
- Marquardt Village
- Marshfield Medical Center
- Mayo Clinic
- Mercy Health Hospital
- Milwaukee County Zoo
- Milwaukee Mitchell Airport
- ProHealth Care Waukesha Memorial
- Rice Lake Weighing Systems
- River Falls Area Hospital
- Sauk Prairie Hospital
- St. Elizabeth Hospital
- ThedaCare
- UW-Platteville
- UW-Stevens Point
- UW-Stout
- UW/VA Hospital
- West Bend Insurance



Project | SEARCH®

Project SEARCH is:

- A nine-month educational, skills training program
- Embedded in the host business
- Designed to provide integration and inclusion
- Goal-oriented toward competitive community employment for each intern at conclusion of program



Project SEARCH Model

- Prepare interns for challenging, complex jobs
- Teach essential, marketable skills
- Give interns a year to build stamina and skills
- Add value to a workforce
- Focus on job and employability
- Use a strategic, collaborative approach to training and employment



Project SEARCH Definition of Competitive Employment

- At least 16 hours per week
- Pays the prevailing wage
- Non-seasonal
- In an integrated setting



Who is eligible?

- Must be 18 or older and:
 - Completed all high school requirements **OR**
 - Out of high school (must be connected to long-term supports)
- Open case with DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Intern and guardians agree to work a minimum of 16 hours per week after the program



Structure of Program

- Three unpaid internships to build skills
- Employability curriculum, full immersion in the host business
- Designed for individuals who are in their last year of high school **OR** no longer enrolled in high school or a high school transition program
 - Student, adult, and hybrid programs
- Age range of 18-35 years is advised (consider cohesiveness of the group when selecting)



Partnerships and Funding

- **School districts and/or CESA** pays program fees for interns still in high school
- **Long-term Supports** pays program fees for adult interns to support the instructor position
- **DWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** pays for all vocational services and UW-Milwaukee CEU
- **Host business** donates classroom, business liaison



Partners and Funding

Partner	Funder	Funds Onsite Position	Cost of Service
Educational Partner (Student, hybrid, and adult sites)	School district, CESA, Long-term Care	Instructor Position: May be an employee of a school district, CESA, or vocational service provider agency	\$10,000-\$18,000 per intern
Vocational Partner	DVR	Service Provider: Skill Trainer, Job Development/Placement, UW-Milwaukee CEU, Maintenance Payment	Around \$18,000 per intern (does not include transportation or clothing)
Host Business	Host business	Business Liaison: Provides training room	N/A



Student Intern Verse Adult Intern

- Fact Sheet 71: [Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#)
- Individuals can participate in an unpaid training program while receiving credit for participation
 - This allows DVR to offer the program to adult individuals and have adult-based models as UWM Continuing Education program provides a credit for this program



Adult intern and UW-Milwaukee

- All adults in the program are enrolled in a Project SEARCH specific course at the University of Wisconsin (UW) Milwaukee
- UW-Milwaukee provides instructor and certificates of completion
- Families with DVR supports enroll the interns in the course



Employment Outcomes

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Graduation Rate	94%	96%	94%	94%
Employment Rate	56%	76%	83%	80%
Wages	\$10.36	\$11.46	\$12.97	\$13.61
Hours	21	21	22	19.5



Project | SEARCH®

WI Project SEARCH 2024-25

- 213 enrolled for 2024-25 at 29 sites
 - On average lose 10%
 - Have seen an increase in retention since maintenance payment began
- Struggles
 - Recruitment
 - Funding from school districts and MCOs
 - Misconceptions of program



Questions?



Website

- National Project SEARCH website: www.projectsearch.us
- DWD Division of Vocational Rehabilitation WI Project SEARCH website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/programs/project-search



Contact Information

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Division of Vocational Rehabilitation TRANSITION SERVICES

ALLISON GORDON

DVR Bureau of Consumer
Services Director

AMY MAY

DVR Workforce Development
Area (WDA) 3 Director

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What is DVR?

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a state agency within the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) that develops occupational talent of individuals with disabilities
- Funding is **78.7** percent federal, **21.3** percent state match
- **Mission:** To assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining, maintaining, or improving employment



Referral and Application Process

- High school students with a disability should apply to DVR at least two years before completing high school
- For those under 18 **or** those over 18 who are not their own guardian, the individual's legal guardian must sign all documents
- Referral to apply can be done online, by mail, or in person



Who is eligible for DVR?

- To be eligible for DVR services you must have a documented medical or psychological disability that presents a barrier to employment and requires DVR services
- DVR staff will work with the applicant to:
 - Gather needed written documentation and information releases
 - Schedule a meeting to discuss the applicant's disability and needs
 - Use existing information to the greatest extent possible (IEP, functional screen, previous medical records, etc.)
 - Refer the applicant for additional assessment if needed



What is Order of Selection (OOS)?

- OOS evaluates how a person's disability affects seven different areas that relate to work:
 - Mobility
 - Communication
 - Self-care
 - Self-direction
 - Interpersonal skills/acceptance
 - Work tolerance
 - Work skills
- As required by federal law, DVR serves those with the most serious limitations due to disability first



What does transition look like?



Key Practices for Transition

- Invite DVR to IEPs or allow DVR to provide technical assistance for students with disabilities who are not DVR consumers but are considering applying for services in the future.
- Offer employment planning consultation through DVR, which can be provided for any student with a disability.
- Schedule and attend regular meetings with the high school.



Key Practices for Transition (cont.)

- Schedule a meeting with DVR, teachers, and other school staff at the start of the school year to provide updates about DVR and share all necessary contact information.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences, transition fairs, open houses, and similar events to provide DVR information.



What is an IPE?

- An IPE is an Individualized Plan for Employment – not to be confused with an IEP (Individualized Education Program)!
- DVR helps consumers develop a plan to find a job, keep a job, or get a better job.



Comparable Benefits

- Must look at other sources in the community before using DVR funds for services
- Examples:
 - Financial aid
 - Transit services
 - Libraries/Computer labs
- Cost sharing between agencies



End Goal: Integrated Employment

“Most integrated setting” is now defined as:

“...a setting that enables an individual to interact with persons without developmental disabilities to the fullest extent possible.”

(§46.279(1)(bm) Wisconsin Statutes; emphasis added.)



Successful Closure

- Once an individual has maintained employment for a minimum of 90 days, DVR will close file successfully.
- For consumers in supported or customized employment this 90-day timeframe begins following the transition to Long Term Support.
- Closures may allow others to come off waitlists.
- Consumers can reapply for services at any time.



Transition Resources

- [DVR's Liaisons to Wisconsin Schools](#)
- [DVR Statewide Transition Action and Resource Team \(START\)](#): DVR's team of local resource staff who can answer your questions about transition services
- [Transition Action Guide \(TAG\)](#): Helps students, parents, teachers and others to understand what they can expect, and their responsibilities during transition from high school to work and community services
- [Transition Services for Students with Disabilities](#)



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)



What is WIOA?

- Signed into law July 22, 2014, it's intended to help Americans with disabilities find high-quality community employment with a focus on youth
- WIOA reinforces the ongoing interagency collaboration between DVR and schools to serve youth in transition
- WIOA established new definitions for:
 - Students with disabilities – attending or enrolled in high school or an educational program, ages 14-21
 - Youth with disabilities – ages 14-24



WIOA Highlights: For Students

- DVR must spend **15 percent** of its annual federal allotment on pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for students ages 14 to 21
- Five new service categories for Pre-ETS are now required:
 - Self advocacy
 - Career counseling
 - Post-secondary counseling
 - Work-based learning
 - Soft skills



DVR Performance

Snapshot (# of HS students by WDA): As of **7/11/24**

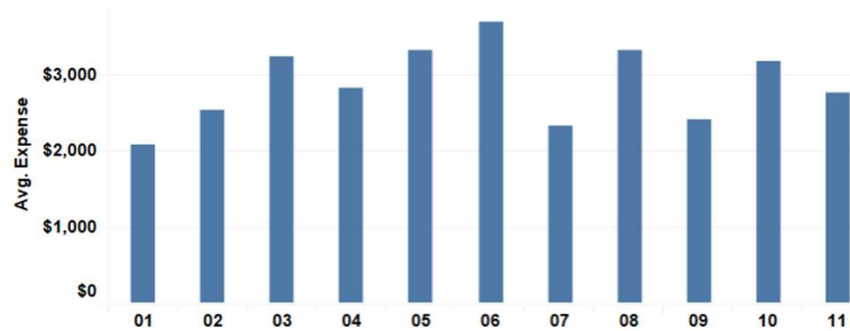
WDA	Age <= 16	Age 17 to 18	Age 19 to 21	Age >=22	Total	IPE
01	51	137	76	0	264	183
02	61	174	107	4	346	327
03	70	222	83	0	375	367
04	114	247	56	0	417	335
05	79	169	103	1	352	309
06	40	128	30	0	198	151
07	90	88	28	0	206	52
08	83	170	57	2	312	226
09	25	72	11	0	108	94
10	108	236	183	0	527	486
11	59	105	43	1	208	158
Total	780	1,748	777	8	3,313	2,688



DVR Performance

Snapshot (Pre-Ets Expenses by WDA, FFY24): As of **7/11/24**

Avg. Pre-ETS Expenses By WDA



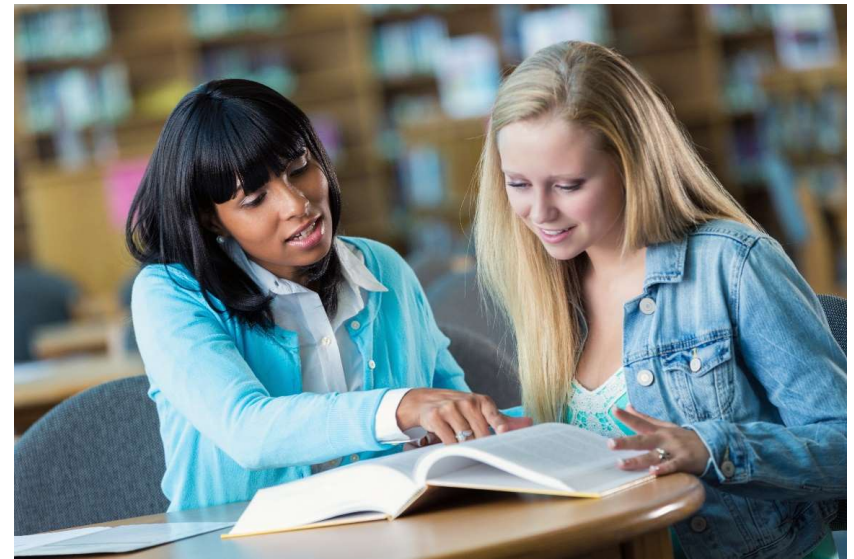
Pre-ETS Expenses By WDA

WDA	Consumers	Expenses	Avg. Cost	Expenses Goal
01	225	\$469,210	\$2,085	\$833,284
02	317	\$808,160	\$2,549	\$1,762,349
03	445	\$1,443,701	\$3,244	\$1,024,844
04	362	\$1,021,862	\$2,823	\$976,954
05	294	\$977,409	\$3,325	\$976,954
06	228	\$843,153	\$3,698	\$680,037
07	65	\$152,092	\$2,340	\$344,807
08	290	\$964,652	\$3,326	\$727,927
09	148	\$359,080	\$2,426	\$488,477
10	349	\$1,108,971	\$3,178	\$1,273,871
11	119	\$328,668	\$2,762	\$488,477
Total	2,842	\$8,476,958	\$2,983	\$9,577,981



WIOA Impact

1. Strengthened collaboration with DVR
2. Delivery of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS)
3. Purchasing transition services



Strengthened Collaboration with DVR

- Per WIOA, schools are responsible for providing Pre-ETS in collaboration with DVR.
- WIOA provides a new list of transition services for Postsecondary Transition Plan (PTP) development for student, family member, teacher, and DVR staff use.



Delivery of Pre-ETS

- Schools must collaborate with DVR to provide and document Pre-ETS for students with disabilities in high school or a post-secondary education program (14-21).
- DVR and schools will continue to outreach to parents and students, referring students at least two years prior to graduation.
- Schools are encouraged to work with employment support providers to seek community-based transition services that fit the Pre-ETS categories.



Purchasing Transition Services

- Per WIOA, schools cannot contract with providers for the purpose of purchasing transition services that include training in subminimum wage employment.
- Schools may not pay for services that engage students in work programs operating under a 14(c) certificate even if:
 - The vendor pays the student minimum wage
 - The student completes work at a pace that earns minimum wage or higher
 - The student volunteers



Questions?



Contact Us



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Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Updates

WRC WIOA/CIE Presentation

WRC | August 2024 | In-Person

WIOA – Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

- Signed into law July 2024, implemented in June 2016
- New definition of CIE
- Larger role for VR to serve students earlier in high school
- VR role in providing competitive integrated employment opportunities prior to a referral to subminimum wage employment
- Common performance measures with WIOA partners
- [WIOA and Rehabilitation Act](#)



CIE Defined

New Definition for **Competitive Integrated Employment**:

- Performed on a full-time or part-time basis;
- Compensated not less than the applicable State or local minimum wage law (is the customary wage);
- Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees;
- At a location-Typically found in the community; where the employee with a disability interacts with other persons and;
- presents opportunities for advancement.



Pre-Employment Transition Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

- Must provide to students with disabilities up to age 21.
- 15% requirement
- Increased outreach to schools

- Required Pre-ETS categories of services:
 - Career Counseling
 - Work-Based Learning
 - Post Secondary Training/College Counseling
 - Independent Living/Soft Skills
 - Self-Advocacy



WIOA Section 511 – Youth

YOUTH

Includes: Ages 14-to Age 24 not in School-Who are considering Sub-minimum wage work:

Required Documented Services and Activities:

School-Transition Services AND

DVR Case-Ineligibility OR

Individualized Plan for Employment including Pre-ETS and unsuccessful case closure AND Career Counseling and Employment Information



WIOA Section 511 - Subminimum Wage

WORKERS IN SUBMINIMUM WAGE JOBS

Includes: All workers currently earning subminimum wage under a 14c license.

Required Documented Services:

DVR-Yearly meeting to include career counseling and information about competitive integrated work opportunities and support services.

- Workers in their first year of subminimum wage work must have a meeting with DVR every six months for the first year of that employment.

Subminimum Wage Employer- Information about local self-advocacy, self-determination and peer-mentoring opportunities.



Competitive Integrated Employment Act 178

- Wisconsin Act 178 passed in March 2018 which requires DVR, DPI, and DHS to develop a joint plan to increase competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities in Wisconsin.

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/related/acts/178>

- CIE Plan for SFY 2024-25
- CIE Annual Report for SFY 2024

<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/partners/cie/>



CIE Interagency Work

- Activities in the CIE Plan carried out by interagency workgroups:
 - CIE Workgroup
 - CIE Data Integration Workgroup
 - CIE Service Provide Quality and Capacity Workgroup
 - CIE Leadership Workgroup



3 Targets and Cross Agency Objectives

1. Increase awareness that work is possible for people with disabilities by promoting CIE opportunities using targeted outreach and education
2. Align service delivery systems and strengthen coordination to increase CIE opportunities for people with disabilities.
3. Prepare students for careers by participating in K-12 career pathways that include a sequence of Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses and work-based learning experiences while connecting them to support services both during and after high school.



DVR Specific Initiatives in Plan

- Create and distribute a poster to Prevocational day services children/adult), group Supported Employment, and adult day care settings.
- Service Provider handout.
- Contribute resources to map out the Supported Employment System.
- Explore the idea of developing Supported Employment curriculum for Service Providers across the State.
- Collect and analyze data through the Work Force Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) project in DWD



Contact Us



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