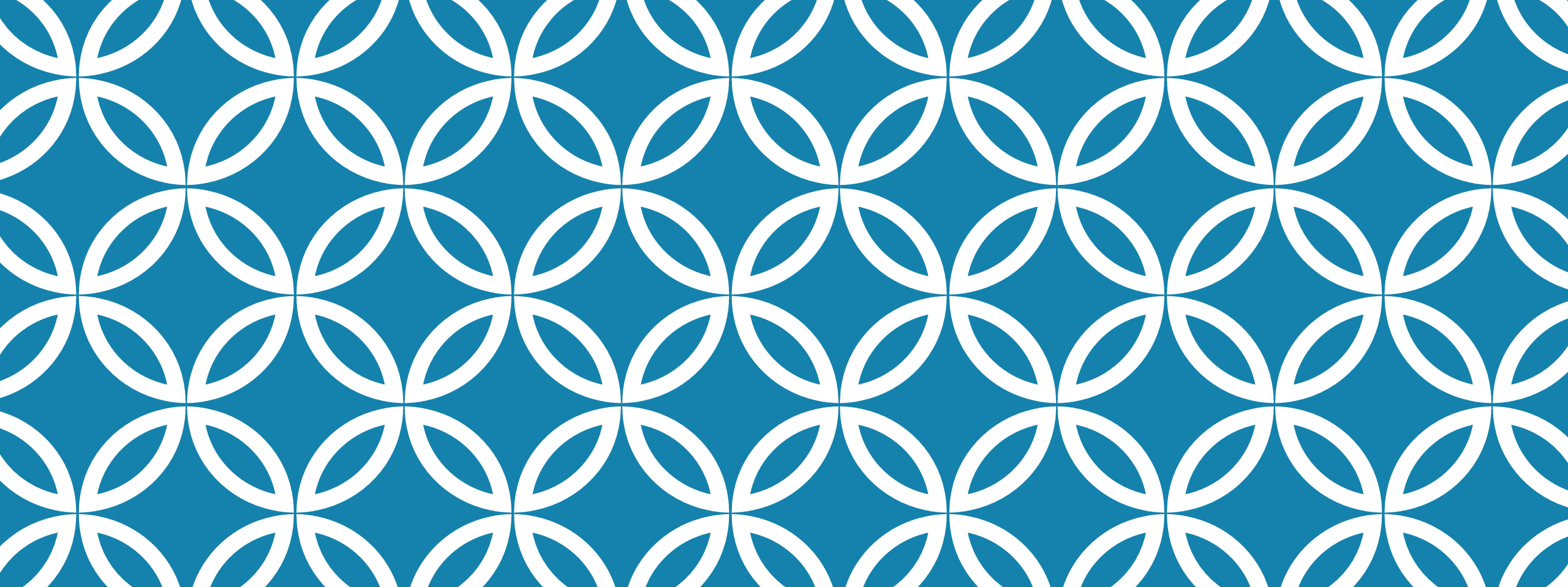


**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
UNIFIED STATE PLAN:
MARCH, 2018 DRAFT UPDATE**



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) STATE PLAN UPDATES: GOALS AND PRIORITIES

VR STATE PLAN GOALS

- 1: Purposefully collaborate with Workforce Innovation and opportunity act (WIOA) core programs, and other appropriate agencies, to provide a client-centered approach to service delivery to assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcomes.
- 2: Increase the number of people with disabilities in competitive, integrated employment.
- 3: Develop program initiatives and training that adequately support Vocational Rehabilitation staff and community rehabilitation programs in the provision of quality services.

There are several priorities under each goal, outlined on the following slides

**No change in goals from prior State Plan, however some priorities have been revised to account for updates and progress, and to ensure priorities are aligned with current and future initiatives. Some priorities have already been achieved or partially achieved, while others are ongoing.*

GOAL 1: PURPOSEFULLY COLLABORATE WITH WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) CORE PROGRAMS, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE AGENCIES, TO PROVIDE A CLIENT-CENTERED APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACHIEVE THEIR EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

Priority 1.1: Develop a common understanding among WIOA core programs and other appropriate agencies (e.g., Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and Department of Education) of Vocational Rehabilitation and the services it may provide to eligible consumers, in varying capacities, in order to provide integrated service delivery and improve employment outcomes for consumers. VR Leadership will continue discussions with appropriate agencies throughout FFY 2016 and develop and/or revise written agreements in FFY 2016.

GOAL 1: PURPOSEFULLY COLLABORATE WITH THE WIOA CORE PROGRAMS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE A CLIENT-CENTERED APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACHIEVE THEIR EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

Priority 1.2: Continue systems modernization efforts, including development of a web-based VR case management system to improve the efficiency and enhance the mobile working environment of VR field staff and enrich the data utilized by VR to make informed program decisions. The system will also ensure appropriate system integration and data-sharing to align resources, collect common consumer information, increase efficiencies, track effectiveness of the program, and ultimately to improve the consumer's experience in VR in meeting his/her employment goal. Develop a project plan and process flow in FFY 2016 and begin design of a new case management system in FFY2017. Efforts toward system modernization will also include identifying strategies to streamline billing procedures and improve efficiency of staff time, such as exploration of an electronic vendor claims payment system. Strategies will be identified by FFY17 and implemented in FFY18.

GOAL 1: PURPOSEFULLY COLLABORATE WITH THE WIOA CORE PROGRAMS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE A CLIENT-CENTERED APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY TO ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACHIEVE THEIR EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

Priority 1.3: Develop and enhance processes and procedures to ensure proper and consistent referrals to and from VR and WIOA core programs (and other appropriate programs) in order to maximize the service options and service delivery for individuals with disabilities. Develop and conduct cross-training for VR and *DWD staff in FFY 2017.

Priority 1.4: Ensure VR staff is trained, highly knowledgeable, and are providing information on services across WIOA core programs, and other appropriate programs that may assist individuals with disabilities achieve their employment outcome. New staff will participate in both web-based and classroom-based training throughout, at minimum, the first year of employment.

Priority 1.5: Work in partnership with WIOA core programs to strategically enhance employer engagement and work-based learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This includes expanding VR employer engagement to develop appropriate disability-related information and resources (e.g., disability awareness training, business-to-business resources for beginning disability hiring initiatives, etc.) for employers. A plan for joint data collection will be developed by the end of FFY17.

*Department of Workforce Development

GOAL 2: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN INTEGRATED, COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT.

Priority 2.1: Develop a coordinated process with the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and State and local educational agencies in assisting individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities who are considering subminimum wage employment or who are already employed, at a subminimum wage, to maximize opportunities to achieve competitive integrated employment. Provide initial career counseling and information and referral (CCIR) services, and appropriate documentation, to youth seeking sub-minimum wage employment as well as ensure that all individuals employed at sub-minimum wage receive CCIR services by July, 2017, and annually thereafter.

Priority 2.2: Identify best practices, create strategies, and partner with other agencies to better serve students and youth with disabilities to ensure a pathway and appropriate services to meet their employment outcomes. This includes ensuring that pre-employment transition services are available to students with disabilities statewide and meeting the *15% earmarking requirement.

**State VR agencies are federally required to reserve 15% of federal VR funds for the provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, ages 14-22.*



GOAL 2: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN INTEGRATED, COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT.

Priority 2.3: In collaboration with the Transition Advisory Council, Department of Education, and other stakeholders, ensure that required pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS) activities are widely available in all 92 Indiana counties by the end of FFY 2018.

Priority 2.4: Continue development of blind entrepreneurs through the Business Enterprise Program and increase trainees of the program. At least 50% of trainees will secure employment as licensed vendors within 6 months of completing training.

GOAL 3: DEVELOP PROGRAM INITIATIVES AND TRAINING THAT ADEQUATELY SUPPORT VR STAFF AND COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROVIDERS IN THE PROVISION OF QUALITY SERVICES.

Priority 3.1: Conduct a systematic review of the new Employment Service Model (effective July 1, 2015) to identify best practices and determine necessary system revisions to ensure the quality of services and employment outcomes. Review trends in service provision and employment outcomes on a quarterly basis throughout FFY 2016, and continue to meet at least quarterly with the Employment Advisory workgroup to review strengths and identify areas of improvement.

Priority 3.2: Continue development of VR staff through professional development and training, including both face-to-face training, one-on-one mentoring, and the ongoing enhancement of web-based training modules (VR Leadership Academy) to increase knowledge about VR service delivery and to build skills of VR staff. VR will introduce new training by March 2016 that will aim to increase focus on counseling and guidance. BRS will continue to evaluate employment outcomes to determine whether enhanced training has impact on the quantity and quality of employment outcomes in FFY17 and FFY18, compared to prior years.

GOAL 3: DEVELOP PROGRAM INITIATIVES AND TRAINING THAT ADEQUATELY SUPPORT VR STAFF AND COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROVIDERS IN THE PROVISION OF QUALITY SERVICES.

Priority 3.3: Develop training and technical assistance opportunities to community rehabilitation providers and staff (e.g., program managers and employment specialists) to ensure best practices and improve the quality of employment services, including supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. BRS will continue to evaluate employment outcomes to determine whether enhanced training and technical assistance has impact on the quantity and quality of employment outcomes in FFY17 and FFY18, compared to prior years.

GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI FUNDS

Goal 1: Ensure that individuals receiving supported employment services have achieved stabilization, or their highest level of independence on the job, prior to VR case closure. VR Employment Service revisions implemented in July 2015 increased focus on stabilization and increased access to supported employment services for VR consumers. It is anticipated that greater long-term retention will result from these changes, for individuals receiving supported employment services.

Goal 2: VR Supported Employment providers will increase knowledge and skills on the provision of supported employment services, including greater understanding and focus on development of natural supports, job readiness training techniques, customized employment, and strategies for achieving stabilization on the job.

Goal 3: VR will increase the provision of supported employment to individuals with a most significant disability, through increased education and training to VR and *CRP staff.

**Community Rehabilitation Program – these accredited entities provide employment services to VR participants through a fee-for-service*

HOW CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

- The draft update of the WIOA Unified State Plan is available for review on the DWD webpage <https://www.in.gov/dwd/2767.htm>
- The draft update of the Vocational Rehabilitation section of the WIOA Unified State Plan is available for review on the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) Announcements webpage <https://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/4329.htm>
- The current WIOA Unified State Plan can be viewed at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/ras/wioa/state-plans/in.pdf>

HOW CAN I SHARE MY FEEDBACK?

- Comments to the draft update of the WIOA Unified State Plan may be emailed to policy@dwd.in.gov, or submitted to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, ATTN: Policy, IGCS SE 304, 10 N. Senate Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46204
- Comments specifically regarding the draft updates to the Vocational Rehabilitation section of the WIOA Unified State Plan may be emailed to Kristina.Blankenship@fssa.IN.gov, or submitted to the Indiana Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, 402 W. Washington Street, Room W453, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
- **Comments will be accepted until 4 p.m. EST, March 9, 2018.**