

**DRAFT**  
**Division of Rehabilitative Services**  
**Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services**  
**Employment Services Organization Steering Committee (ESOSC)**  
**April 09, 2013 Meeting Minutes**  
**DRS Central Office**

**Members Present:** ESOSC Chair Gary Cotta, Linda LaMona via VTC, Thalia Simpson-Clement, Robin Metcalf, Alisha Meador, Dave Wilber, Chuck McElroy, Ericka Neville, Heather Norton, Michelle Howard-Herbein, Nova Washington, Phil Nussbaum, Lisa Morgan, Sharon Bunger, Mark Keith, Lance Wright and Amy Thomas, Marshall Henson

**Members Absent:** Sharon Harrup, Quintin Mitchell

**Guests Attending:** Shirley Lyons, Russell Ray, Evan Jones, Rachel Rounds, Joanne Ellis,

**DRS Staff Attending:** Kathy Hayfield, Donna Bonessi, Carrie Worrell, Matthew Deans, Doug James Via Fairfax VTC.

**Call to Order:**

Gary Cotta, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:41 AM and asked all present to introduce themselves starting with the Committee members.

**Draft Minutes Review and Approval:**

A motion was made by Chuck McElroy and seconded by Dave Wilber to approve the minutes as written January 8, 2013. The minutes were approved and are available on the ESSP Website under Minutes at <http://www.vadrs.org/essp/minutes.htm>

**Division of Rehabilitative Services Director's Report:**

Kathy Hayfield, DRS Director, welcomed the group and proposed building agendas during committee meetings to insure that meetings are utilized well and are valuable to each member's time and travel.

The General Assembly allocated an additional \$1.3 million to DARS for FY 14. This enabled us to offer services to 1000 clients on waiting list March 1st.

DARS continues to serve clients. Compared to the first two quarters of last completed FFY our waiting list is smaller by 22%, referrals are up by 15%, plans are up by 34%. The number of clients being served by ESOs is up by 700. The average wages are up to \$10.18. Spending with ESOs is up by \$2 million compared to this time last year. Ms Hayfield solicited feedback on the "flow". Dave Wilber and Michelle Howard agreed that the flow is slow and steady. Employment outcomes are down by 2% vs. last year. Ms Hayfield asked the group for assistance with this and input of factors that are affecting outcomes.

Some feedback offered:

- Lance Wright suggested that turnover in Job Coaches has resulted in delay in training experienced Job Coaches, which affects outcomes.
- Mark Keith said the economy is still a factor.
- Michelle Howard said she doesn't see JCTS referrals at all, only SE referrals.
- Lance Wright and Alisha Meador said that Criminal Records are also a factor in the clients who are referred.

Ms. Hayfield reviewed that some offices are using a checklist to help determine if a consumer is job ready in terms of requirements such as picture ID or Social Security Card for I-9 purposes.

Karen Tefelski asked if there is a projected date to opening Category One, MSD. Ms. Hayfield reported that there is no projected opening date but DRS will review projected spending again in the summer. She also explained that although our categories are closed, we're not seeing a drop off in spending. We are hopeful that Sequestration will not have a big impact on VR services. We are expecting up to a 5.9% cut. However, we also expect a 3.5% COLA increase. We also hope to receive reallocation dollars in September from RSA.

The General Assembly appropriated additional money for LTESS - \$240,000 and increases in Brain Injury Services along with other community services.

Group Authorizations (GAs)- Donna Bonessi reported there are 4 webinars being offered through May 2013. Ms Bonessi suggested holding off on registering for the trainings in May due to a change in licensing for go-to. There was discussion around sending GAs electronically due to Public Health Information (PHI). It was explained that auditors expressed concerns with DARS electronic security and the need for encryption software.

Lance Wright said that due dates on RFAs are now due on the 20<sup>th</sup> by some of the offices he works with; the earlier date makes it difficult to project accurately because it is premature. Doug James, Northern Regional Manager, offered an answer stating that funds are not distributed until the 1st, which gives 10 days for managers and counselors to approve hours in time for the 1st. He also said that the RFA shouldn't be used for communication about progress but this should be done via email or phone.

Lisa Morgan asked about the ESO Outcome Report will it be called a scorecard or an outcome report. She asked how it's being used. Donna Bonessi explained that it's not widely being used at this time. Training will be provided to counselors before it's released on the website. The training for DRS staff will occur this summer. She explained that the report should be used as a tool for counselors to use with clients when making ESO selections. She stressed this will be part of the process, but not the entire process. Kathy also explained that field managers were recently trained what the report is and how to use it. The next new ESO Outcomes Report will be available in October. Questions were asked about how to handle errors in the data reports. Donna Bonessi stated that if there are errors in the report to communicate that to her and she will work on correcting this.

### **Commissioner Rothrock Comments:**

Commissioner Rothrock reported that the General Assembly allocated an additional \$1.3 million increase to the VR program. He expressed appreciation for the folks that lobbied the General Assembly on the need for DRS services.

A group of representatives from VA will participate in the National Governors Association meeting being held in Pittsburgh, PA in May 2013. One of the best practices that will be highlighted from Virginia is LTESS.

The Commissioner discussed Executive Order 55 that directs state agencies to work with DRS, DBVI, VCCS, DBHDS to increase awareness of hiring practices and working in partnership to use their offices to do SAs and OJT.

Commissioner discussed concerns with DOJ action in Oregon regarding Sheltered Workshops. He asked Donna and Kathy to look into how VA is utilizing this type of service. In Oregon, DOJ is suing Oregon due to their propensity to rely on sheltered employment and sub-minimum wages and not offering opportunities to leave these setting.

Sequestration is not huge concern for VR, only a small % cut in our program after a COL increase. Other programs will see a 5% cut in their budgets.

### **GWU TACE Program Update**

Dr. Rob Froehlich reported that the ACRE Employment Certificate Training online training just wrapped up. Feedback was helpful for planning purposes on what folks need for training. This year they will continue with the three in person sessions; 1 in DC Metro area, 1 in Beckley WV, and 1 in Greater Philly.

Training needs assessment will be done regionally by the CRP Liaisons. They will be offering a 3 week online training for folks who work with criminal backgrounds and utilizing motivational interviewing strategies. The ACRE trainings will be conducted within the next couple months.

The GWU TACE website will be updated soon to make things easier for registering for trainings.

This is year 5 of 5 years for the TACE grant; there may be a possibility of a 1 year extension to 6 years for the grant for GWU to 2014.

The committee asked if the TACE center can help ESOs to develop approaches to improving their SE outcomes and businesses. Dr. Froehlich reported they may be able to assist.

Dr Froehlich also provided an update for VRA - Thank you for those of you who participate but keep in mind VRA is not just a DARS program, but those who are in ESOs should participate too. Contact Dr Froehlich for more information.

### **Additional Comments:**

Karen Tefelski said that Collaborations conference will be 9/29 through 10/2.  
Chuck McElroy asked about rates for this year, Donna Bonessi explained that it will be same as last year.

### **Sub-Committee Meetings:**

#### **Funding Sub-Committee:**

Chuck McElroy, subcommittee chair reported there are three issues to address 1) Analysis of wages that are sub-minimum and also looking at EES dollars and whether a 3 year rolling average would be more effective. 2) Review of the EES guidelines will be moved to Policy Sub Committee. 3) DARS will resume taking the 1.87% admin fee this fiscal year.

#### **Public Policy subcommittee:**

Dave Wilber reported the subcommittee will start working with Donna to help agenda for items of the ESOSC, review EES guidelines and look at sub-min wage issues from a public policy stand point.

#### **Nominations Sub Committee:**

Amy Thomas reported that the nominations sub-committee had the difficult task of selecting three members to rotate off in June 2013 to ensure a consistent rotation for the committee. They used a combination of demographic and other information to determine the rotation. Call for Nominations will go out April 15 with a deadline of April 26<sup>th</sup>. They will look for additional demographics and ESO info to help increase diversity. New Member orientation will be held on May 29<sup>th</sup> at DARS. Today is the last meeting for Amy Thomas she is going to nominate someone else from her agency. The nominations committee needs a new chair as a result. She will continue to serve in this role until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjourn:** The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:15 PM

### **2013 Meeting Schedule**

April 9, 2013

July 9, 2013

October 2013 (To be determined)

Note: VTC sites at Abingdon, Roanoke, Portsmouth, Danville and Fairfax will be confirmed for these dates.