

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES
LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES REPORT
March, 2008

PROGRAM PLANNING

- The 2008 Counselor Academy will be held in April, 2008 and there will be 34 participants. The counselor academy is held each year to train new staff on LRS procedures, process, and service provision. All Counselors are required to attend.
- Public hearings will be held on April 23, 2008 at 9:00am in Baton Rouge, Alexandria, New Orleans and Shreveport regarding the change in LRS policy which involves placing hearing aids under a financial needs test.
- The LRS Communications and Marketing Plan has been finalized and implementation is expected to occur within the next couple of months. Part of the plan includes a multi-media education and awareness campaign that will target business owners as well as training for LRS staff in media etiquette. Also, LRS staff statewide will participate in a special Memorial Day event that will focus on a moment of silence to honor all veterans (living or deceased), especially those who are disabled.

BLIND SERVICES/RANDOLPH SHEPPARD

- Randolph-Sheppard manager vacancies have been filled. As of today, we have only one manager who has been trained, but has not been awarded a location. The following locations have new managers:
 - Capitol Annex
 - Wooddale Towers
 - Bluebonnett Post office
 - Department of Transportation and Development
- Contract extensions for the provision of services to the older blind are in place, and run through June 30, 2009. Current contracts are with the Affiliated Blind of Louisiana Training Center in Lafayette, the Louisiana Center for the Blind in Ruston, and the Lighthouse for the Blind in New Orleans. Services are provided on a regional basis.
- We have new counselors working the blind caseloads in the Thibodeaux, New Orleans, and Alexandria regions. Counselors working in these caseloads were either promoted or transferred to new positions within LRS.

TRANSITION

- Program Coordinator continues to participate on the Youth Leadership Steering Committee and plans for the YLF to be held in July, 2008 are continuing.

- Program Coordinator continues to participate in the Transition State Core Team and is continue to work on the state plan for transition. The team will be attending the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center's training May 6-9, 2008 in Charlotte, NC for further assistance.
- Program Coordinator continues to follow up on the referral process that was developed with OCS and DOL during the cross trainings held in November and December, 2007.

TICKET TO WORK/SOCIAL SECURITY

- LRS continues to participate in the Ticket to Work program. Over 95% of Tickets are being assigned to LRS. There are currently 17 Employment Networks.

LOUISIANA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF

- A pilot program for Support Service Providers (SSP) has been developed with Affiliated Blind of Louisiana. ABL has provided SSP training to many individuals and services have begun throughout the Lafayette, Lake Charles, and Baton Rouge regions. Many individuals in the Deaf-Blind community have indicated great satisfaction with this new program.

TBI/SCI TRUST FUND

- There are currently 9 Contracts with vendors who provide Case Management services to the TBI/Spinal Cord Injury consumers.
- Currently serving 504 consumers in the program. There is a waiting list of only 175 consumers which has been significantly reduced from 316 at end of 12-07.
- Program Manager continues with Site Reviews and monitoring of the 11 Case Managers.
- Annual report has been completed and sent to the legislatures.
- As of close of business 3/24/08, \$1,397,021 has been spent on client services for the current 504 clients. We expect to have an additional amount of \$700,000 to spend between now and June 30, 2008. This additional money will come from a reduction of the current 9 contracts for Case Management and PCA services. Most of the consumers now receive PCA services through other programs and waivers.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Bureau Administrator is currently meeting monthly with all Lead Area Managers to ramp up operations and assure that all locations for shelters are secured and all supplies are in place in the event that any State Operated Shelters are opened.
- Bureau Administrator participated in Continuity of Operations (COOP) Training, for State Government to learn processes to maintain operations in the event an office has to be relocated due to a disaster or pandemic flu outbreak
- Bureau Administrator will be attending the annual Emergency Management Meeting April 9th and 10th in preparation for the upcoming Hurricane season and to ramp up for any disaster.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

- Information gathered from the Consumer Satisfaction Survey was shared at the DD Council meeting held on 1/16/08 and a copy of the survey was provided to the DD Council members at the meeting.
- The Supported Living Contract with Resources for Independent Living Center (RIL) currently provides services to twenty-two consumers. The contract amendment was approved and as a result of increased funding, consumers being served will be increased.
- Annual Site Reviews are in the process and the site review for Statewide Independent Living Council has been completed. Also, Southwest Louisiana Independence Center (SLIC) site review has been completed.
- Louisiana's Annual 704 Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2006/2007 has been completed and mailed to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION COUNCIL

- The last Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) Meeting was held in Baton Rouge, LA on January 24, 2008. The next meeting will be held March 27-28, 2008 in Metairie, LA.
- LRC/Statewide Independent Living Council Members attended the SILC Conference in New Orleans, LA on January 25-28, 2008.
- The LRC completed the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2006-2007.
- Currently there are six vacancies in LRC. However there are three applications pending at Boards and Commissions. Two new applications have been received and will be forwarded for approval following the March meeting.

CONTRACTS/OPERATIONAL PLAN/LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- Reporting has been completed on two quarters of the Operational Plan and the third quarter reporting will be completed in April, 2008.
- LRS is the pilot agency for the online Contract Management System for DSS. This is designed to expedite the contract approval process within DSS.