

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)
LRS Director's Quarterly Report
June 2017

PROGRAM SERVICES

- **Social Security/Ticket to Work** - Social Security TTW has now converted to a Portal System and they are still several months behind in processing claims.

Also, we have put together a comprehensive presentation that TTW Coordinator presented to Regions 1-Region 6. The purpose of the presentations is to educate the counselors on how they can prevent an untimely filing. In doing so, we are hopeful we will have considerably less untimely filings for the next SFY.

- **Employment Initiative** - Meeting employers through SHRMS and the LA Diversity Council continues. A presentation on LRS to the employers that are participating in the Job fair in Slidell, LA was done on May 4, 2017. The presentation was focused on Employment Services as well as the number of clients that we actually place last year, and how many of the people ended up in specific job categories. This information enables employers to grasp the talent, skill sets and education level that our clients have as a number of employers believe that our clients are only employed at one-dimensional, routine type jobs.

Employment Coordinator continues to meet employers that participate in job fairs. She attended the Advocate job fair that was held at the Belle of BR in April. She also attended 3 job fairs in May 2017 (Slidell, Lafayette and Baton Rouge)

- **CRPs**- Vendors in the Baton Rouge Region began submitting renewal documentation. Program Coordinator has been reviewing regional recommendations and verification documentation for vendorship renewals. To date 34 vendor compliance certifications have been approved between Regions I and II. Due to the Order of Selection being closed some vendors are hard pressed to make tough decisions about whether to continue to provide services, whether to reduce staff, and about seeking other funding sources as it becomes increasingly difficult to cover the costs of providing employment services across the board.
- **Supported Employment** - CRP Bureau met with WINTAC to discuss Customized Employment. Customized Employment was defined for the group with emphasis on the discovery process. Also discussed were the differences

between SE and CE as well as the differences between individualized job placement and the customized job placement process. WINTAC's intent was to provide LRS with information and strategies for including other partners in planning and implementation of CE in Louisiana. Program Manager and Program Coordinator attended the SE Core Training in Lafayette and in Baton Rouge.

- **Pre-ETS** – Program Manager has submitted a new Third Party Cooperative Arrangement contract for Orleans Parish School Board to employ a Transition Specialist at McDonogh 35 High School. LRS has also been approached by other districts and discussions are underway.

- **Assistive Technology** - In 2017 a new model for Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Engineering (AT/RT) services delivery was developed. The two major components of the new AT model include:
 - 1) a contractual agreement between LRS and the LSU Health Sciences Department (LSUHSD) to hire a Physical Therapist and a Rehabilitation Engineer, who both possess the Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) certification for the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America (RESNA)

 - 2) Outsourcing engineering, technical, clinical evaluations and assessments for rehabilitative driving services on a “fee-for-services” basis. Three new facilities, two hospital-based, and one university-based with Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (CDRS) and vehicular assets to test the ability of our consumers to drive safely using their personal mobility (wheelchairs) as required have been recruited, vetted, and installed in our approved vendor-provider listings.

Currently, the AT Program Coordinator is engaged in a LWC audit of the LSUHSD contract performance. He continues to work with the CRP Bureau Administrator to enhance state-wide access to fee-for-services assessments and evaluations state-wide.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- **Second Injury Fund** - In 2016-17 the annual allocation from the SIF Board this year was again capped at \$500,000. This plus the RSA match totaled \$2,347,000. Thus far in 2017 (7/1/2016-6/1/2017) \$ \$2,201,355 has been

authorized and spent on five-hundred-sixteen (516) successful closures (employed), with one-hundred-ninety-one (191) cases in service status.

State/Strategic Plans:

- The Combined State Plan can be updated in 2018 and LRS will be submitting the results of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment at that time. The surveys are being refined at present and will include surveying the transition students with disabilities this time.
- LRS is reviewing policy and guidance to incorporate changes resulting from WIOA.
- LRS State Office is now housed at the Annex Building on the main campus of LWC headquarters.

Legislation:

- 2017 Second Extraordinary Session ended June 16, 2017. The Appropriations Committee added 1M SGF as a line item to LRS in the LWC budget resulting in a total SFG allocation of \$7,399,887. (2016 SGF=\$8.1M and 2017 SGF= \$6.5M)

Training:

- LRS is in the process of upgrading to Windows 10 in order to support the needed data elements required by WIOA. Once the upgrade is completed, a newer version of AWARE will be installed to capture the information needed for the new 911 reporting. We will begin reporting the new data elements later this fall. Training will be provided to staff on the additional information that must be captured to satisfy WIOA requirements.
- All Regions will participate in Benefits Planning training in July.

Human Resources:

- LRS continues to have staff reduction with a current number of 188 employees. It is anticipated that by the end of 2017 we will have a total of 178 staff members.

Minority Outreach:

- **Louisiana Diversity Council** –The Employment Coordinator spoke at the Louisiana Diversity council –Baton Rouge Chapter in April 2017, HR professionals attended.

Randolph Sheppard:

- We are investigating the possibility of changing the vending location at the Pollock federal prison from an unassigned location into an assigned location. This means that a portion of the proceeds from the location are currently being contributed by a 3rd party vendor to the Blind Vendors Trust Fund. We believe the location earns enough so that it could support a blind manager, and could create an employment opportunity for an individual who is blind; therefore, we are working toward this goal.

Contracts:

- Completed a TPCA for Pre-ETS with Orleans Parish School Board. Just awaiting final approval from DOA. We will have a total of 7 TPCA's providing Pre-ETS.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council:

- Meeting on July 27, 2017 at Embassy Suites Hotel in Baton Rouge from 9am to 4pm
- LRC completed a consumer satisfaction survey in April. The satisfaction rate is 76.5%