

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) LRS Director's Quarterly Report December 2018

Vocational Rehabilitation:

- The LRS Director, Assistant Director and Bureau Administrator recently conducted a statewide visit of all regional office to discuss the agency vision, mission and allow staff to meet the new Director.

Statistics:

- Numbers in Delayed Status by Eligibility Category as of 11/30/2018. Order of Selection Categories 1, 2, and 3 are currently open.

Category	Number
Category 1	0
Category 2	0
Category 3	0
Category 4	144
Category 5	30
Total	174

As of 11/30/18, LRS has 7,971 active open cases. The number of LRS cases closed successfully (Closed Rehabilitated) as of 11/30/2018 is 214. This covers the period 10/1/2018 to 11/30/2018. This is an increase of 108 more closures for this period this year as compared to last year which had 106 closures.

During Program Year 2017, LRS served 948 individuals with developmental disabilities expending a total of \$2.1 million for services provided.

Training:

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Association, National Rehabilitation Association's Southwest Region and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services has scheduled its 2019 training conference on February 11 – 12, 2019 in Baton Rouge. Sessions will include presentations on specific disabilities, the re-entry program form Dept. of Corrections, Assistive Technology, the Governor's Initiatives, and many more rehabilitation topics. Individuals interested in learning more or in assisting with the conference can contact Tiffany Anthony at 928-1400 or tanthony@uplifted.org
- The training department has scheduled the Counselor Academy for March 11th – 15th and the 26th – 29th, 2019. We are excited to have a large group of approximately 20-25

participants in this academy. We are working to incorporate the new requirements from WIOA. A work group was established to help facilitate the changes and include new information regarding new processes and performance measures such as Measurable Skills Gains, Educational Credential Attainment and Effectiveness in Serving Employers.

Pre-ETS/JAG:

- LRS is continuing to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities through Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCAs), fee-for-service vendors and the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program. LRS is currently providing Pre-ETS services to more than 4,000 students statewide.
- LRS is also shifting our practice to opening cases for students with disabilities in Vocational Rehabilitation caseloads so that Pre-Employment Transition Services, along with other additional services needed, can be provided in order to create a smooth transition to training or employment once the student graduates. LRS provided Pre-ETS to over 500 JAG participants in SFY 2018.

Customized Employment (CE):

- The Customized Employment Pilot is ongoing. There are three Vendors in Baton Rouge and one in Houma that are participating in the Pilot. The Vendors in Baton Rouge are: Sides Employment Services, Goodwill Industries and ACE Consulting. The Vendor in Houma is Terrebonne Arc (TARC). To date there are six LRS consumers who are receiving Customized Employment Services through the pilot program.
- With assistance from WINTAC, LRS Counselors, District Supervisors and Regional Managers statewide received training on Customized Employment. On October 16th, 17th and 18th, Charlotte Guy of Marc Gold & Associates provided staff with an overview of Customized Employment. Her presentation was entitled "Customized Employment: Starting with the End in Mind." In her presentation Charlotte gave staff some considerations for authorizing CE services from the perspective of the individual, the VR Counselor, and the local environment and job market. She also discussed the role and focus of Discovery in the CE process, as well as, the Essential Elements of Customized Employment.

Assistive Technology (AT):

- Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology services, are conducted on a fee-for-services on a state-wide basis. Approved service providers and vendors must meet and adhere to the guidelines of the RSA and DOL laws and statutes. Professional providers and technicians must adhere to the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of N. America (RESNA) code of ethics and standards of best practice.
- Standards for Assistive Technology/Rehabilitation Technology devices, systems of prescription, evaluation, installation and training and reimbursement are developed by

the Rehabilitation Engineering Society of N. America (RESNA). Thus, all technical advice and assistance will be forthcoming from the National Institute for Disability Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). For more information on the current federal program of technical guidelines and support, please access this URL: <https://www.acl.gov/aging-and-disability-in-america/data-and-research/nidilrr-publications-and-resources>

- LRS is planning to conduct regional training(s) for the Counselors and staff on the new procedures to acquire AT/RT assessments, evaluations, and other services via ZOOM™ presentations, telephonic and computer-based consultations with the AT Coordinator, and on-site training as feasible.

Social Security/Ticket to Work (TTW):

- Social Security TTW is ongoing and we are on course to reach our projected goal for SFY 2018-19. State office continues to stay in contact with the Regional offices asking them to check their list of open cases to ensure we don't have any TTW open cases that to be closed. The TTW Program Coordinator has been recently sending out short Power Point presentations to various regions with the focus being on how to avoid untimely closures.
- The Employment Coordinator has also had numerous calls with Keitra Hill, the Ticket Program Manager/Employment Network Development Consultant with SS Administration's Ticket to Work. A conference call was also held with the Employment Networks that are in the Louisiana area which focused on better ways to hand off SVR cases to the Employment Networks.

Employment Initiatives:

- In March 2018, Louisiana set a goal to serve as a Model Employer for business by a commitment to improve hiring, recruitment, and retention of people with disabilities through an Executive order signed by Governor John Bel Edwards. The National Conference of State Legislatures stresses that "Individuals with disabilities represent an underrepresented and largely untapped segment of the labor pool for consideration in state government employment. Subsequently, the State as a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force convened and sought ways to improve employment among those with disabilities in state civil service. LRS's Employment Coordinator is the Point of Contact that most state department's HR Directors correspond with. A presentation will be made to Louisiana Civil Service on December 5, 2018 that focuses on the expectations of the task force as well as highlighting the jobs that our clients obtained in the last SFY.
- The Employment Coordinator at LRS did a presentation at State's Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in September 2018 and then went and met individually with various HR managers and their staff at their respective offices to better establish rapport with those offices.

HR Updates:

- Effective November 14, 2018, State Civil Service (CS) has released an update to notify of changes made to the rule by rule review concerning the changes to CS Rules 22.3(a), 22.8(a), 23.3(a), 23.4(a) and 23.5(b). These rules now refer to "individuals deemed eligible for services with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services". Under the rule-by-rule review for CS Rules 22.8(a), it is noted that CS will now place individuals answering the appropriate questions for testing exemptions on the eligible list to be considered for an interview/hiring if they are eligible for services with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. These applicants will still have to attach the appropriate documentation from LRS indicating that they are eligible for services with LRS. This is a major step forward for state agencies hiring people with disabilities.
- LRS is in the process of hiring additional staff to enable increased capacity in areas of the state that have the most need. During this last quarter, LRS has hired an additional eight employees in field offices that have begun working or will begin before the end of the year. The additional staff has helped with the increase in volume of referrals, overall case management, and better services to consumers.

Contracts:

- Independent Living (IL) Older Blind contracts have been renewed with LA Center for the Blind, Affiliated Blind of LA, and LA Association of the Blind. Lighthouse for the Blind IL Older Blind contract is nearing approval from the Office of State Procurement.
- LSU Paycheck Third Party Cooperative Arrangement contract will terminate December 31, 2018. LSU HDC will become a vendor to continue to provide services previously provided through the contract.
- LRS has submitted a contract for the "Ticket Tracker Program" for Social Security claims which should assist LRS in obtaining cost reimbursements from Social Security. It is being processed for approval.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC):

- The LRC Executive Committee held a Planning meeting on October 11, 2018 at the Red Cross building in Baton Rouge from 10am to 2pm.
- An orientation for new LRC members was held on October 24, 2018 at Louisiana Workforce Commission from 10am to 4pm.
- The LRC's most recent meeting was held on October 25, 2018 at Lod Cook Hotel Meeting Center in Baton Rouge from 9am to 4pm.
- Future LRC meeting dates are January 24, 2019, April 25, 2019, July 25, 2019 and October 24, 2019. Locations are yet to be determined.
- The LRC currently has 23 members and 3 openings. One for Business, Industry and Labor, one representative of the directors of section 121 (American Indian VR Program) and one representative from the Parent Training and Information Center.