

**Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)
LRS Director's Quarterly Report
October 2020**

PROGRAM SERVICES

Pre-Employment Transition Services:

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) provides Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 21 with an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP), students receiving services under Section 504, or students with a documented disability. Pre-ETS include Job Exploration Counseling, Work-Based Learning Experiences, Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities, Workplace Readiness Training and Training on Self Advocacy. LRS is currently serving approximately 3,300 students statewide in 53 parishes and over 340 schools systems in the state.

LRS currently has 13 active Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) with local or state education providers to provide Pre-ETS and is continuing to pursue additional TPCA's with local school districts.

It is the goal of LRS to spend in the neighborhood of \$8.6 million on Pre-ETS activities this state fiscal year.

Vocational Rehabilitation:

Vocational Rehabilitation Consumer Statistics (current quarter):	
Number of Applications	769
Number of Eligibility/Delayed	635
Number of New IPEs	628
Number of Closed Rehabilitated (Successful Closures)	176
Total Open VR cases as of October 1st	8,764
Total Open Pre-ETS cases as of October 1st	1,744

Number of LRS Consumers placed in High Demand Occupations for SFY 2020	
New Orleans (Region 1)	256
Baton Rouge (Region 2)	225
Houma (Region 3)	95
Lafayette (Region 4)	160
Lake Charles (Region 5)	55
Alexandria (Region 6)	41
Shreveport (Region 7)	154
Monroe (Region 8)	143
Total number of cases that were closed	1,357
Total number of consumers that were placed in high demand jobs	1,129
Percentage of jobs in LRS SFY 19-20 that were placed in high demand jobs	83%

Economic Need Criteria

In July, an emergency rule was approved to allow LRS to increase the threshold of income that individuals/families are allowed to have in order to receive services that require consideration of economic need. LRS has essentially doubled the amount of income allowable in order to serve more people during the current pandemic. The following chart is currently being used by LRS to determine eligibility for these services:

Check Family size in appropriate box.

Persons	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Other
Check Family Size									
Allowable BLR**	\$63,800	\$86,200	\$108,600	\$131,000	\$153,400	\$175,800	\$198,200	\$220,600	

For each additional person over 8 add \$22,400.00

Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialist (REDS):

LRS has three REDS currently in the Lafayette, Lake Charles, and Shreveport Regional Offices. LRS is in the process of hiring REDS in all other regional offices. The Lafayette REDS was recently hired; therefore, there is no production for Lafayette this quarter; however, the following production was achieved for Lake Charles and Shreveport:

- Lake Charles placements from October 2019 to September 30, 2020 -7
- Lake Charles closures from October 2019 to September 30, 2020 -15

- Shreveport placements from October 2019 to September 30, 2020- 67
- Shreveport closures from October 2019 to September 30, 2020 - 49

DD Open VR Cases: July 1, 2020 thru September 30, 2020

Disability Cause	New Orleans	Baton Rouge	Houma	Lafayette	Lake Charles	Alexandria	Shreveport	Monroe	Total
Autism	163	147	44	62	30	24	47	21	538
Cerebral Palsy	37	40	9	10	8	19	26	9	158
Intellectual Disabilities	182	55	30	40	39	40	68	42	496
Specific Learning Disabilities	267	253	65	18	6	68	104	164	945
Total	649	495	148	130	83	151	245	236	2,137

DD Closed Rehabilitated Cases: July 1, 2020 thru September 30, 2020

Case Status	Case Type	Disability Cause	Total
Closed-Rehab	VR	Autism	9
		Cerebral Palsy	5
		Intellectual Disabilities	10
		Specific Learning Disabilities	9
Total:			33

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

National Disability Employment Awareness Month:

On September 30, 2020, the President issued a proclamation naming October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. As such, this month will be a time to recognize the talent and skills of Americans with disabilities and promote an inclusive workforce. As this is LRS' year round mission, we will continue to provide the necessary services to ensure opportunity and advancement of individuals with disabilities in the workplace.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC):

The Louisiana Rehabilitation Council will meet on Thursday, October 29, 2020, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm via ZOOM. The LRC has begun working on the annual report that is due by December 31, 2020.

The LRC has recently added new members:

- Christa Blackwell, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- Laura Nata, Representative of a Parent Training and Information Center
- Laura Stazio, Representative of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty representing themselves
- Courtney Ryland, Advocate for individuals with disabilities
- Karen Roy, Current or former applicant for, or recipient of, vocational rehabilitation services

There are still 4 vacant positions (one representative of the area of rehabilitation technologies, Director of a Federal Sect. 121 Project, Representative of Business, Industry and Labor, and a Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services) needing to be filled.

Training:

Staff have been engaged in numerous training opportunities during the last quarter. All staff attended Career Pathways training to learn more about incorporating more long-term career planning with consumers. Staff continue to look for trainings to enhance their

knowledge about disabilities, virtual services, Pre-Employment Services, and providing services during the pandemic.

The 2020 New Counselor Academy begins the first week of October. This year will be our first year having a virtual Academy using the Zoom video conferencing service. Our staff have become proficient with Zoom and have acclimated well to meeting virtually so we anticipate this being a successful training.

During early phases of COVID-19, staff began meeting with consumers virtually. While this is still an option, staff can now see consumers face-to-face while adhering to CDC guidelines.