

**Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division**

**Section II-Mark Up-Copy
Fiscal Year 2009 State Plan
For the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and
Supplement for the Supported Employment Services Program**

Attachment 4.2(c): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) partners with ARS by reviewing, collaborating and providing input and recommendations to the VR State Plan, all ARS policies and procedures through the SRC Policy and State Plan Committee (Committee). The goals of the Committee are to review and provide input to ARS state plan; collaborate with ARS on state needs assessments; and to review and provide input on ARS policies for services.

- Response of ARS to SRC recommendations is made through the process of committee responses to their respective activities. This is an ongoing process that involves collaboration and cooperation between ARS and the SRC. There were no instances of rejection by ARS of input or recommendations by the SRC.
- The Deputy Commissioner for Field Operations provided a draft copy of the State Plan Update to the SRC Committee. The SRC reviewed and approved the Plan with no additions or recommendations.
- The SRC recommended that ARS request additional funding for Title I through the reallocation process. Other SRC goals and recommendations are to enhance communication with state and federal legislatures; for the SRC to participate in the Arkansas Workforce One-Stop Centers to improve accessibility; and to explore community outreach projects to learn needs of people with disabilities.
- The SRC provided input regarding a new innovative program, the Arkansas Leadership for Minorities with Disabilities, was initiated to expand and improve VR services to traditionally unserved and underserved populations.
- ARS staff conducted a town meeting in Hot Springs, AR, on May 16, 2007 to obtain public input on the State Plan. One member of the SRC attended the meeting. Also attending were some of the RSA personnel who were in the state at the time for the On Site 107 Review.
- The SRC provided input regarding ARS' participation in the Statewide Transition Task Force. The Special Education Department worked closely with ARS and the Statewide Transition Task Force as a participant in the first Statewide Transition Summit. There were over 200 representatives from school districts, parent groups, Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Education that after a three-day conference emerged with a comprehensive plan to address the needs of Arkansas students in transition programs.

Attachment 4.8(b): Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities

(1) Cooperation with Agencies that Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS collaborates and coordinates services with federal, state and local agencies that contribute to the vocational rehabilitation and independent living of Arkansans with disabilities. ARS cooperates with agencies in carrying out activities such as planning and coordinating services to people with disabilities to build capacity in communities, improving the quality and quantity of services, and avoiding the duplication of services. Agencies that ARS collaborates and coordinates services with include:

- Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
- Arkansas Department of Higher Education
- Arkansas Department of General Education, Special Education-Transition
- Centers for Independent Living
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- Developmental Disability Providers
- Supported Employment Vendors
- A-Win Project Benefits Planning Project
- Social Security Administration Ticket to Work
- DHS - Division of Aging and Adult Services
- DHS - Working Disabled Medicaid Program
- DHS - Division of Behavioral Health Services
- DHS - Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Spinal Cord Commission
- Arkansas Work Force Centers

ARS maintains an active presence on numerous councils and committees, including:

- The Arkansas Independent Living Council
- The Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities
- AR Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council
- Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council
- Arkansas Youth Development Collaborative
- Arkansas Transition Taskforce
- Governor's Taskforce on Integrated Services and Supported Housing
- Youth Leadership Forum
- Arkansas Workforce Investment Board

ARS does not have any cooperative agreements regarding programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture, or State use contracting programs.

(2) Coordination with Education Officials

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS maintains cooperative agreements with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education regarding the continuity of provision of vocational rehabilitation services and access to higher education. ARS maintains interagency agreements with the Arkansas Department of Education - Special Education, regarding transition services to students in public schools. ARS participates in the state level Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP). The AITP is a taskforce made-up of representatives of state agencies including ARS, DHHS-Division of Services for the Blind, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Special Education-Transition, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, DHHS-Division of Mental Health, and parent advocates.

~~The ARS Policy and Procedures Manual under the Arkansas Transition Program Section, Page B-17 states “The ARS counselor must determine eligibility for services and ensure the development and approval of the IPE by the time the student leaves the school setting.” ARS will revise the Policy Manual to include the wording “or, if ARS is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.”~~

~~The current Transition agreement generally provides for this with the wording “The aforementioned parties have a common and concurrent interest in working cooperatively to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to the skill, training and necessary supports to transition successfully from school to the world of work”. ARS is a member of the Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP) that includes the agencies involved in transition in the state. The current transition agreement will be revised to include “Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post school activities, including VR services”.~~

~~ARS is a member of the Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP) that includes the agencies involved in transition in the state. The current transition agreement will be revised to include “Transition planning by personnel by the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs”.~~

The Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP) that includes the agencies involved in transition in the state is currently revising the interagency agreement regarding transition services. The current status of the agreement is that it remains in a draft form awaiting final revisions and approval by all parties. ARS has provided a draft copy to RSA for technical assistance.

(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS has cooperative agreements with Community Rehabilitation Programs throughout the state and has established a fee-for-service system for provided services. ~~ARS has written cooperative agreements with a statewide network of private non-profit agencies providing supported employment (SE) services and extended services to individuals with the most significant disabilities.~~ ARS established work groups with representatives of the non-profit service providers that developed agreed upon procedures for referral, outcome milestones and the fee schedules for service provision.

(4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS is in the process of renewing required written cooperative agreements with all private non-profit agencies providing supported employment (SE) services and extended services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. All providers of SE services to consumers of ARS must have a written agreement on file stating that they will provide extended services for the client as long as the consumer is employed.

Attachment 4.10: Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

4.10(a) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(1) Qualified personnel needs.

- A. The total number of personnel employed by the agency in the provision of providing vocational rehabilitation service is **135**. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor total number is **88**. The total number of support staff is **47**. Total population served is **20,000**.
- B. The total number of personnel needed by the agency to provide vocational rehabilitation service is **100** VR counselors and **50** support staff members.
- C. ~~The projected total number of personnel needed in the next five years to provide vocation rehabilitation services to a projected population of **25,000** individuals will be **125** VR counselors and **60** support staff members.~~
- C. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors?

FFY	Individuals Served	VR Counselors	Support Staff
2009	19,000	100	50
2010	20,500	106	53
2011	22,000	112	56
2012	23,500	118	58
2013	25,000	125	60

(2) Personnel development.

- A. The following is a list of higher education institutions that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Arkansas-Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling; the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling; and, Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling.
- B. The following is the number of students enrolled in the higher education institutions in Arkansas: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville: **11** students, from minority background **5**, with a disability **6**; the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, **210** students (web based), from minority

background **40**, with a disability **13**; and Arkansas State University **13** students, from minority background **3**, with a disability **2**.

IHE	Type of Program	Total Students	Disability	Minority
ASU	Masters RC	13	2	3
UAF	Masters RC	11	6	5
UALR	Masters RC	210	13	40

- C. The following is the number of students who graduated from the higher education institutions in Arkansas: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville with MRC **7**, Certificate **9**; the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, with MRC **52**, Certificate **10**; and Arkansas State University with MRC **10**, Certificate **0**.

4.10(b) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

(1) ARS has received upgrades for support staff positions and continues to use the Career Ladder Incentive Program to help meet future needs. ARS continues to recruit VR counselors based on the Market Labor Rates for the VR Counselor Series. Also during the 2007 Legislative Session, Special Language was provided, indicating a Forgiveness of Student Loan Program. Newly hired VR counselors can be provided up to \$2,000 per year payment to the counselor's student loan creditor. This Special Language along with the Special Entry Rates and Reclassification Study Language will assist the agency in recruiting qualified VR counselors and qualified support staff.

(2) As part of the maintenance of offering a program of development, ARS maintains a list of higher education institutions in the state, which prepare rehabilitation professionals. This listing is maintained by type of program and by category of professional development. ARS also monitors students who enroll in rehabilitation and related programs at each of the institutions and programs by category and the number of students who graduated during the prior year, with and without certification or licensure. The Staff Development sections at ARS and DSB have collaborated to develop and disseminate a formal survey of the higher education institutions to assure timely and accurate data for planning proposes. Both agencies work closely with these institutions to provide internship and practicum opportunities for their students. All Universities are notified when job openings within the agency becomes available.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has implemented the following plan to address the requirements of the CSPD. The initial phase of the plan had focused on rehabilitation counselors. The agency has been working diligently with the Arkansas Legislature, Arkansas Office of Personnel Management and Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration for approval to address the requirements of CSPD to include all Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff. On September 5, 2006, clarification of our CSPD plan was given by the Director of Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration to include all staff training in the ARS

Vocational Rehabilitation In-Service Training Program Grant. Also during the 2007 Legislative Session, Special Language was authorized to ARS for a general waiver of the Financial Management Guide on Continuing Professional Education, which prohibits state agencies to pay for college training for employees. This waiver allows ARS to provide college level coursework in degree programs for eligible employees selected by the agency. This Special Language will assist the agency in assuring that qualified professional personnel are in place to provide quality rehabilitation services to disabled Arkansans.

Coordination And Facilitation Of Efforts Between The Designated State Unit And Institutions Of Higher Education

The Human Resources Development Administrator is actively involved on the advisory council for the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. This involvement gives the agency first hand information on students who will be graduating from the MRC programs and where they would be willing to live. The HRD Administrator also presents to the graduating class the employment opportunities with the agency that are forth coming. All three universities: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, The University of Arkansas at Little Rock and Arkansas State University are invited to the agency's annual training conference where the students are treated to an open forum with the agency. The commissioner along with the senior management team discusses the agency progress and job opportunities. A reception is held in their honor where they have the opportunity to talk with VR counselors in the agency to discuss their work situations. All students including minority students are encouraged to join the professional rehabilitation organizations, The National Rehabilitation Association (NRA) and The National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC). The agency actively recruits minorities and students with disabilities at these universities. Three of our professional organizations provide scholarship opportunities to those individuals with disabilities that major in the field of rehabilitation. A scholarship is also provided for minority individuals that major in the field of rehabilitation. During the 2007 Legislative Session, Special Language provided a Forgiveness of Student Loan Program that allows newly hired VR counselors up to \$2,000 per year payment on their student loans to the counselor's student loan creditors. This Special Language along with the Special Entry Rates and Reclassification Study Language assists the agency in recruiting and retaining qualified VR counselors and qualified support staff.

4.10 (c) Personnel Standards

(1) Because there is no standard established by the State of Arkansas, ARS bases its personnel standards for VR counselors on the degree needed to meet the national CRC requirements through CRCC. CRCC requires a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field, as defined by the CRCC.

(2) ARS currently has 70 out of 88 counselors that meet the national CRC standard. (ARS presently has 4 unfilled counselor positions.) The priority of training and development within CSPD continues to be emphasized for direct service delivery personnel in ARS. ARS presently has 7 counselors involved in distant learning graduate training programs in order to become

eligible to sit for CRC exam. ARS has 7 counselors that are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a CSPD program. Of these, 2 are counselors who have between 16-25 years of career service; and 5 are counselors with 25 or more years of service and are eligible to retire. Preference on training is given to the higher priority during the current fiscal year based on availability of training funds.

Priority 1: Counselors with related bachelor's degrees that have completed graduate hours in a rehabilitation-counseling program and/or are currently enrolled or accepted into a program.
(7 counselors)

Priority 2. Counselors who have between 16-25 years of career service with the state and are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a learning program.
(7 counselors)

Priority 3: Counselors who have 25 or more years of career service with the state and are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a learning program.
(5 counselors)

In all priority categories, counselors who receive educational assistance would be expected to comply with the provisions of the ARS Educational Leave Policy and agree to continue working with the agency for two years for every 9 credit hours completed. When there is not an applicant with the master's degree, ARS will permit the hiring of a bachelors degreed counselor in a Counselor II position with a condition of employment that the person will seek and obtain a masters degree within three years of employment.

(3)(A) The Human Resource Staff Development component of the CSPD team reviews and oversees the current training levels of all personnel in each category. Required standards and evaluation of training needs and timelines are established. The HRD component develops and monitors agency policy and procedure in terms of hiring, training, or retraining personnel to meet standards. This function includes notifying public agencies and all personnel of those steps and timelines.

(B) Effective October 1, 2007 ARS will hire VR counselors in the position classified as Rehabilitation Counselor II and III. VR counselors hired must be classified as Rehabilitation Counselor II or III. Effective September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the classification of Rehabilitation Counselor II, III or Senior Counselor should meet the standard of having a master's degree and either be CRC certified, or eligible to sit for CRC certification. After September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the position classified as Rehabilitation Counselor III or Senior Counselor, who do not meet the standard of having a master's degree and either CRC certification, or eligibility to sit for CRC certification, will be cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II. The counselors who do not meet CSPD requirement and are cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II will be required to have prior approval on cases where paid for services are planned on their IPE. The District Manager or their designee will provide prior approval. Those counselors who do not meet the standards established will be required to continue in the agency's CSPD program that will continue to assist counselors in becoming CRC certified or eligible to sit for CRC certification.

Time Period By Which Existing State Unit Personnel Will Meet The Standards

ARS has 7 counselors that are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a CSPD program. Effective September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the classification of Rehabilitation Counselor II, III or Senior Counselor should meet the standard of having a master's degree and either be CRC certified, or eligible to sit for CRC certification. After September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the position classified as Rehabilitation Counselor III or Senior Counselor, who do not meet the standard of having a master's degree and either CRC certification, or eligibility to sit for CRC certification, will be cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II. The counselors who do not meet CSPD requirement and are cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II ~~will be required to have prior approval on cases where paid for services are planned on their IPE. Counselors under prior approval must have approval under of a qualified rehabilitation counselor in order to:~~

will perform routine case management functions of service delivery. These counselors will not be authorized to perform the following functions that must be initiated and completed by a CRC level counselor or supervisor:

- ~~• Make an eligibility determination.~~
 - ~~• Approve an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) and any amendments to the IPE (including no cost services).~~
 - ~~• Make the determination, in consultation with the individual, that the record of service of an individual who has achieved an employment outcome can be closed.~~
- A determination that the applicant requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment...i.e., eligibility determination and Certificate of Eligibility and/or Certificate of Ineligibility.**
 - Development and approval of all components of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) including annual review.**
 - Amendments to the IPE.**
 - Determination of a "satisfactory outcome", that the employment outcome is satisfactory and the individual is performing well in the employment, i.e., Closure Amendment.**

(C) Annually all ARS staff receives a personnel performance evaluation from their immediate supervisor. This evaluation is reviewed and signed off by a senior manager in the agency's chain of command. The evaluation packet includes an Individual Training Plan (ITP) that is completed by each employee and signed off by the immediate supervisor. The ITP is placed in each employee personnel file and review annually. This plan indicates what training each employee needs to complete their job duties in line with providing services to our consumers. The annual evaluation report results on each employee are documented and tracked by the agency personnel/human resources section. The personnel/human resources sections also track critical positions within the agency that need to be filled. A report is done annually on hires within the agency and including a breakdown by minority background and employees with disabilities who are hired. VR counselors' progress while in our CSPD program is tracked and reported on, on an

annual basis. The Chief of Field Services monitors these reports. He is responsible for making sure established timelines are met within the agency's CSPD plan.

(D) ARS continues to work with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to realign the state classification specifications for VR counselor in the II & III and senior levels. We now advertise for a Counselor II position with the preferred qualification being a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and CRC certified. ARS also established an internal counselor salary grid with the approval of OPM. This grid allows the agency to hire VR counselor in the counselor II series under different salary ranges based on qualification and certification. The grid also allows for cost of living rates for counselor series III and senior counselor levels. All personnel hired by ARS in any position classified as a Rehabilitation Counselor II, III or Senior Counselor will meet the standard of a master's degree and/or be CRC certified. When there is not an applicant with the master's degree, ARS will permit the hiring of a bachelors degreed counselor in a Counselor II position with a condition of employment that the person will seek and obtain a masters degree within three years of employment.

4.10 (d) Staff Development

(1) The Human Resource Staff Development (HRSD) component of the CSPD team reviews and oversees the current training levels of all personnel in each category. Required standards and evaluation of training needs and timelines are established. Training needs assessments are done with the technical assistance of the regional continuing education program located within the higher education institution within the state. This instrument is used to determine training needs within the agency and aid the agency in allocating in-service training dollars to specific training programs. The HRSD component develops and monitors agency policy and procedure in terms of hiring, training, or retraining personnel to meet standards set within the agency. The local universities are also utilized to provide training opportunities that are noted in the assessment.

(2) ARS ensures that all personnel receive appropriate and adequate continuing education. The agency provides for employees to attend classes, seminars, and conferences, and disseminates information through newsletters, in-service training, workshops, etc. The field program conducts district meetings annually in their respective districts where the latest techniques for providing service to our customers are discussed. Research results are discussed and presented to all VR counselor and support staff. A Fall Conference is conducted where all direct service support staff and services providers attend and policy, procedures and the latest assistive technology devices are showcased. An annual Spring Training Conference is also conducted. Continuing Education Credits and CRC Certification Credits are provided at the training conferences.

4.10 (e) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

ARS will continue to employ personnel who are able to communicate in the native languages of applicants for service and clients who have limited English speaking ability. ARS also provides special communication modes such as interpreters, captioned videos, specialized telecommunications services and materials for individuals who are deaf and deaf-blind, as well

as other specialized media systems for individuals with disabilities. Staff with language skills is hired and special equipment is provided as needed. Interpreters are provided in training settings when needed. Sign language skills are included as a minimum qualification for positions providing services to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Special entry rates are offered to persons who possess special language or communication skills. ARS also is providing training opportunities in Spanish. Arkansas continues to experience a large influx of Spanish speaking citizens into the state and these citizens are requesting our services. The agency is providing assistance to our employees in order to help them accommodate these needs.

4.10 (f) Coordination with Personnel Development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

IDEA updates and changes are forwarded to all direct service support personnel through correspondence and memorandums. Changes and updates are coordinated in our comprehensive system of personnel development that allow us to develop adequate training for all staff. ARS provides training opportunities for our direct service support personnel in the areas of transition. Key VR counselors are involved with state transition coordinators that are provided by the State Department of Education, Special Education within the state. ARS VR counselors are involved in regional transition coordination meetings. A statewide annual Transition Summit is held with ARS being one of the co-sponsors. ARS is also a member of the statewide Transition Advisory Committee. Information on IDEA is forwarded to all ARS employees including the latest IDEA reauthorization updates. The annual Transition Summit has been very helpful in bringing all the stakeholders together that work with our high schools in transitioning disabled student from school to the world of work. ARS is presently looking at restructuring the field program in order to effectively utilize personnel that are working with our partners in the region and area schools. ARS is fully committed to providing transition services through our agency with collaboration and cooperation with the public schools and the State Department of Education, Special Education.

Attachment 4.11 Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services

**~~Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served
Under Part B, Sec. 110 Of Title I – FY 2009~~**

**Estimates of the Number of Individuals in the State to be Served and the Cost
Of Services Under Part B, Sec. 110 of Title I – FY 2009**

The U.S. Census Bureau indicates 230,031 individuals with an employment disability in Arkansas ages 16-64. (Source U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3.)

Priority Category I: Eligible individuals who are most **COST**
significantly disabled.

Number to be Served	-	Number to be	
2,712		Rehabilitated - 366	\$ 1,890,000.00

Priority Category II: Eligible individuals who are
significantly disabled.

Number to be Served	-	Number to be	
16,192		Rehabilitated - 1,844	\$ 11,610,000.00

TOTAL TO BE SERVED	TOTAL TO BE REHABILITATED	TOTAL COST
	<u>2,210</u>	
<u>18,904</u>		<u>\$13,500,000.00</u>

<u>Priority Category III*:</u>	<u>Eligible individuals who are non-significantly disabled whose rehabilitation is expected to require multiple VR services.</u>	
Number to be Served - 1,353	Number to be Rehabilitated - 271	\$ 966,042.00
<u>Priority Category IV*:</u>	<u>Eligible individuals who are non-significantly disabled that cannot be classified into a higher priority.</u>	
Number to be Served - 697	Number to be Rehabilitated - 139	\$ 497,658.00

Totals Categories III, IV	2,050	410	\$ 1,463,700.00
Totals Categories I, II, III, and IV	20,954	2,620	\$ 14,963,700.00
*ARS does not expect to be able to serve Categories III and IV during FY 2009.			

**Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served
Under Part B Of Title VI -FY 2009**

Disability of Individuals	Number to be Served	%	Number to be Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Projected Funding
Mental Illness	55	19%	21	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 50,350.00
Mental Retardation	112	38%	28	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$100,700.00
Traumatic Head Injury	7	2%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 5,300.00
Other	120	41%	32	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 108,650.00
TOTAL	294	100%	83		\$265,000.00

Attachment 4.11(c)(3): Order of Selection

Attachment 4.11(c)(3)(A): The Order to be Followed in Selecting Eligible Individuals to be Provided VR Services

Under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998) certain state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies are required to have an order of selection. An order of selection requires that a priority be given to individuals with the most significant disabilities in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The order of selection is required when a state determines that there are not sufficient funds to serve all the individuals with disabilities within the state including those with disabilities that are considered non-significant.

The current ARS Order of Selection assures the highest priority in provision of services to clients with the most significant disabilities. Services and expenditures are closely monitored to enable the ARS Commissioner to close or open priority categories as deemed appropriate. This will assure services are continued for cases determined eligible and receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment. Adequate funds will be conserved to provide diagnostic services for all applicants to determine eligibility and category placement.

The Order of Selection priority categories, justification for each, outcome and service goals are listed below:

ORDER OF SELECTION

ARS will provide services based on an Order of Selection on a statewide basis. The ARS Order of Selection assures clients in Priority I and II will have first priority for the provision of services. If funds become available, individuals in Priority III and IV may receive services.

Rehabilitation clients who have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services or extended evaluation (EE) services in place prior to the implementation of the Order of Selection policy will receive services as recorded in their IPE.

Priority Category I - Most Significantly Disabled

An individual with a most significant disability is defined as one who has a significant physical or mental impairment which:

- 1) Seriously limits **two or more functional capabilities** (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of employment outcome;
- 2) Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services* over an extended period of time**; and
- 3) Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities as defined below***.

Priority Category II - Significantly Disabled

An individual with a significant disability is defined as one who has a significant physical or mental impairment which:

- 1) Seriously limits **at least one functional capacity area** (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of employment outcome;
- 2) Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services* over an extended period of time**; and
- 3) Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities as defined below***:

Priority Category III - Non-Significantly Disabled Needing Multiple Services

An individual with a non-significant disability who is expected to require multiple VR services*.

Priority Category IV - Non-Significantly Disabled

An individual with a non-significant disability not classified in a higher priority.

Definitions:

* Two (2) or more major VR services, i.e. counseling, guidance, assistive technology, physical or mental restoration, training, and placement.

** 90 days or more from the date services are initiated.

*** One or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from: amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), spinal cord conditions (including paraplegia and quadriplegia), sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

Attachment 4.11(c)(3)(B): Justification for the Order

Estimates of the Number of Individuals In the State and the Cost of Services In the Closed OOS Categories that ARS Does Not Expect to be Able to Serve - FY 2009

<u>Priority Category III:</u>	<u>Eligible individuals who are non-significantly disabled whose rehabilitation is expected to require multiple VR services.</u>	<u>COST</u>
<u>Number to be Served - 1,353</u>	<u>Number to be Rehabilitated - 271</u>	<u>\$ 966,042.00</u>
<u>Priority Category IV:</u>	<u>Eligible individuals who are non-significantly disabled that cannot be classified into a higher priority.</u>	
<u>Number to be Served - 697</u>	<u>Number to be Rehabilitated - 139</u>	<u>\$ 497,658.00</u>
<u>Totals Categories III, IV 2,050</u>	<u>410</u>	<u>\$ 1,463,700.00</u>

Attachment 4.11(c)(3)(C): Services And Outcome Goals, And Timelines

The services and outcome goals, and the timelines for individuals served in each priority category within the ARS Order of Selection are as follows: Priority Category I to serve a total of 2,712 consumers with 366 rehabilitated during FY 2009; and, Priority Category II to serve a total of 16,192 consumers with 1,844 rehabilitated during FY 2009. Priority Category III, Non-Significantly Disabled, has no services planned since sufficient funds are not available during FY 2009.

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

**Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served
Under Part B Of Title VI –FY 2009**

Disability of Individuals	Number to be Served	%	Number to be Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Projected Funding
Mental Illness	55	19%	21	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 50,350.00
Mental Retardation	112	38%	28	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$100,700.00
Traumatic Head Injury	7	2%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 5,300.00
Other	120	41%	32	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 108,650.00
TOTAL	294	100%	83		\$265,000.00

ARS addresses the goals and plans for distribution of SE funds in Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Report of Progress, etc. in Goal 10. ARS Goal 10 is “To increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to CRPs and other vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services. The Strategy states “The agency will provide technical assistance and develop incentives to SE providers including CRPs to increase the availability of SE services to consumers. At the same time, the agency will place greater emphasis on supported employment outcomes and traditional sheltered employment outcomes will be de-emphasized.”

Strategy involves an increased focus on appropriate SEP outcomes as opposed to traditional sheltered employment. ARS has developed interagency agreements with the state agencies that serve individuals with the most significant disabilities including DDS, Special Education, Behavioral Health and the Division of Services for the Blind. The agreement places an emphasis on competitive employment as a desirable outcome for individuals with the most significant disabilities including developmental disabilities and mental health. Effective July 1, 2008, ARS implemented an increased fee schedule for SE providers, including the CRP’s, on a fee-for-service basis. The goal is to stimulate an increase in the number of SE providers in the state and to provide an incentive for provision of SE services in rural areas that are unserved and underserved. In turn, the goal is to increase the number of referrals, o individuals served and rehabilitated in the SE program.

Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use Of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

Introduction

Department of Workforce Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division is the program within the state of Arkansas (along with the DHS-Division of Services for the Blind) that provides vocational rehabilitation services to assist individuals with significant disabilities in becoming employed and living independently. The state Vocational Rehabilitation programs are funded through the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 1998 Amendments (Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998) and are provided through federal and state matching funds. Federal funding is received through the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education.

Goal 1

To successfully meet or exceed the RSA requirements for performance.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS exceeded all RSA requirements for performance on the standards and indicators except 1.1. ARS performance is listed below.

ARS Performance FY 2006 on the Standards And Indicators Established Pursuant To Section 106

Standard 1: Employment Outcomes

Performance Indicator 1.1

The data indicates that the number of individuals in Arkansas who achieved an employment outcome decreased during FY 2007 the last year that data is available - from 2,502 in FY 2006 to 2,323 in FY 2007. .

Performance Indicator 1.2

The data indicates that 58.1% of the individuals in Arkansas who exited the VR program after receiving services achieved an employment outcome that exceeds the federal benchmark of 55.8%.

Performance Indicator 1.3

The data indicates that the percentage of individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, which exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage was 100% in Arkansas, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 72.6%.

Performance Indicator 1.4

The data indicates that of all individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage that

were individuals with significant disabilities in Arkansas was 84.5% which exceeds the federal benchmark of 62.4%.

Performance Indicator 1.5

The data indicates that preliminary results for Performance Indicator 1.5 in Arkansas, the ratio was 0.63, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 0.52.

Performance Indicator 1.6

The data indicates that in Performance Indicator 1.6, the mathematical difference between the percentage that reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at exit and the percentage that reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at application was 57.3 in Arkansas that exceeds the federal benchmark of 53.0.

Standard 2: Equal Access to Services

Performance Indicator 2.1

The data indicates that in Performance Indicator 2.1, the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds, as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities was 0.93 in Arkansas, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 0.80.

Goal 2

Enhance the availability and utility of job development and placement services through a comprehensive study and analysis by a Task Force to recommend future action (establish benchmarks) as recommended in the Comprehensive Assessment on page 36.

Strategy

As follow up to the Needs Assessment the Agency will collaborate with the SRC to convene a placement Task Force by October 31, 2006, that will evaluate current practices, and provide recommendations for enhancing job development/placement services for customers.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

After analysis ARS initiated a fee-for-service system for job development/placement services for customers. The new system will be implemented July 1, 2008.

Goal 3

Increase public awareness and knowledge of Vocational Rehabilitation programs and services by 10%.

Strategy

Agency will establish a public relations and outreach work group by October 31, 2006, to evaluate current practices, assess agency needs, and provide recommendations to increase public awareness of rehabilitation programs.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

With the assistance of our umbrella agency, the Department of Workforce Education, ARS has significantly improved the monthly newsletter, adopted new promotional brochures, and increased outreach to the community. New PSA's are being developed. Also, a new video presentation is being developed on the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center's (HSRC) services.

Goal 4

Increase number of CSPD participants by 8%.

Strategy

Agency will continue providing Comprehensive System of Personnel Development training opportunities and support throughout FY 07 to assure development of qualified staff and seamless succession.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS has 10 VR counselors actively involved in CSPD working on a master's degree. ARS hired 5 VR counselors with CRC last year. This is an increase of 10% of qualified staff under CSPD requirements.

Goal 5

Reduce systemic barriers that may inhibit counselor interaction with consumers to increase counselor/client contact by 10%.

Strategy

- Agency will implement an updated policy manual beginning October 1, 2006 to meet RSA 107 recommendations.
- Agency will implement on October 1, 2006, a revised version of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Integrated Management Information System (ARIMIS) that will include the Standard of Occupational Codes, and edits that enhance the reporting requirements.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

The above strategies have been completed. ARS has also implemented a follow-up process for consumers exiting HSRC increasing counselor contact and leading to increased employment outcomes for this population.

Goal 6

Increase collaboration and partnerships with Centers for Independent Living (CIL) including referrals, marketing and public information.

Strategy

Agency will implement strategies to strengthen collaboration with Independent Living Centers.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

An IL work group was formed including representatives of ARS, the Division of Services for the Blind, the CIL directors, and the Director of the SILC. The purpose of the IL workgroup is to encourage cooperation and collaboration among the partners, improve services delivery, and work towards completing SPIL objectives and activities. The IL workgroup meets quarterly.

Goal 7

Increase number of students served with transition programs by 10%.

Strategy

The agency will continue participation throughout FY 07 in the state Transition Task Force to assure collaboration and increase referrals.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS continues to participate in the Transition Task Force. ARS has hired a full-time Transition Coordinator, two additional full-time counselors as Transition specialists and reassigned three counselors to serve as full-time Transition specialists.

Goal 8

Increase availability of assistive technology (AT) for consumers by 5%.

Strategy

- Field Services will continue to utilize the Successful Employment through Assistive Technology (S.E.A.T.) program throughout FY 07 to increase the assessments and application of technology equipment and devices for consumers.
- Agency will continue collaboration and referrals to the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) to increase awareness and utility of assistive technology.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS continues to pursue the strategies above and assistive technology referrals continue to rise.

Goal 9

Reserve and use a portion of the funds under Sec. 110 for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the state plan and for the support of the SRC and/or the SILC.

Strategy

Earmark funds from Title 1, Sec. 110 to support the SRC and the SILC.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

Title I funds for Innovation and Expansion were reserved and used to support the SRC in the annual resource plan and, along with funds from the Division of Services for the Blind, the SILC in the annual budget. On July 1, 2007, the beginning of the state fiscal year, I & E funds were earmarked for a new innovative program, the Arkansas Leadership for Minorities with Disabilities Program. This is an outreach program to expand and improve VR services to traditionally unserved and underserved populations.

Goal 10

To increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to CRPs and other vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services.

Strategy

The agency will provide technical assistance and develop incentives to SE providers including CRPs to increase the availability of SE services to consumers. At the same time, the agency will place greater emphasis will on supported employment outcomes and traditional sheltered employment outcomes will be de-emphasized.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

The agency is developing goals and strategies for SEP as a result of the FY 2007 RSA On-Site Review completed August 2007. The outcome of the SE goals for FY 2007, the most recent complete data that is available, is outlined in the charts below. Strategy involves an increased focus on appropriate SEP outcomes as opposed to traditional sheltered employment. ARS has

developed interagency agreements with the state agencies that serve individuals with the most significant disabilities including DDS, Special Education, Mental Health and the Division of Services for the Blind. ARS is implementing an increased fee schedule for SE providers, including the CRP's, on a fee-for-service basis and the number of SE providers within the state is increasing. The agency anticipates increased numbers of referrals and individuals served in the SE program in years to come.

**The Estimated Number Of Individuals To Be Served
Under Part B Of Title VI -FY 2007**

Disability of individuals to be Served	Number To be Served	%	Number to be Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Projected Funding
Mental Illness	19	6%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 16,839.46
Mild Mental Retardation	132	44%	25	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$116,989.97
Traumatic Head Injury	6	2%	0	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 5,317.73
Other	142	47%	27	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$125,852.84
TOTAL	299	100%	54		\$265,000.00

**The Actual Number Of Individuals Served in FY 2007
Under Part B Of Title VI**

Disability of individuals Served	Number Served	%	Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Funding
Mental Illness	17	6%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 61,342.59
Mild Mental Retardation	122	43%	21	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$106,736.11
Traumatic Head Injury	5	2%	1	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 11,041.67
Other	140	49%	47	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 85,879.63
TOTAL	284	100%	75		\$265,000.00

Attachment 6.3: Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

ARS is implementing an initiative to expand and improve Supported Employment (SE) Services for individuals with the most significant disabilities throughout the state. The initiative was recommended as part of the 2007 RSA On-Site Monitoring. The existing MOU was strengthened to enhance collaboration with ARS, DSB, DD and MH state agencies. Another MOU was developed with the CRP's and SE service vendors to implement strategies to expand the SE system, as well as expand job placement services, beginning July 1, 2008. Strategies include increasing the number of vendors offering SE and job placement statewide through enhanced incentives; utilizing a fee-for-service approach with CRP's and SE providers; revised fee schedules; and commitment from DD and MH state agencies to emphasize work as a high priority outcome.

ARS provides Supported Employment (SE) Services in compliance with Sec. 7 Definitions in the Act based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment. To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site. SE services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities. ARS identifies and makes arrangements (including entering into cooperative agreements) with other State agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of SE services.

State agency partners involved in ARS SE include the Developmental Disabilities Services, Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health Sciences, Division of State Services for the Blind and Arkansas Department of Education. SE providers are utilized statewide. Faulkner Co. Council on Developmental Disabilities in Conway, First Step School in Hot Springs, Easter Seals in Little Rock, Community Employment, Inc. in Springfield, Mo., serving northwest Arkansas, and Abilities Unlimited of Jonesboro are a few of the extensive list of vendors for SE services.

All providers of SE services to consumers of ARS have a written agreement on file stating that they will provide extended services for the client as long as the client has the job. The timing of the transition from employment to extended services is immediate. Extended services begin immediately after the case is closed status 26 when the employment outcome is achieved.