# California State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, September 6, 2023, and Thursday, September 7, 2023

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. both days

Meeting location: Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
721 Capitol Mall, Room 301, Sacramento, CA 95814

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Approved on November 29, 2023**

**Attendance**

SRC Members (in-person): Benjamin Aviles, Ivan Guillen, Nicolas Wavrin, Theresa Comstock, Joe Xavier, Susan Henderson, Joe Xavier.

SRC members (by Zoom): Kecia Weller, Elizabeth Lewis, Chanel Brisbane, La Trena Robinson, Lisa Hayes, Jonathan Hasak

DOR staff (in-person): Kate Bjerke, Victor Duron

DOR staff (by Zoom): Peter Dawson, Brian Connors, Nicolas Weis, Jessica Popjevalo, Peter Frangel, Judy Gonzalez, Marla Harper, Zak Ford, Janelle Tisher, Craig Rubenstein, Nancy Wentling, Matt Baker, Alfonso Jimenez, Della Randolph

Members of the public (by Zoom): Gina Griffiths, Abigail Henderson

Marcos Villa

# WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2023

# Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

A quorum was established and Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, called the meeting to order. SRC members and DOR staff introduced themselves.

# Item 2: Public Comment

Gina Griffiths, Assistant Director of Community Inclusion, World Institute of Disability, spoke about the DB 101 website. Griffiths is seeking to increase engagement with the community to support the website.

# Item 3: Approval of the June 7 – 8, 2023 SRC Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Motion: It was moved/seconded (Comstock/Henderson) to approve the June 7 –8, 2023 SRC quarterly meeting minutes as presented. (Yes – Comstock, Wavrin, Aviles, Guillen, Henderson, Brisbane, Lewis, Hasak, Hayes), (No – 0), (Absent – Robinson, Weller), (Abstain – 0). The approved minutes will be posted on the SRC webpage.

# Item 4: Benefits Planning

Jessica Popjevalo, Chief, DOR Participant Services Support Section, and Brian Connors, Manager, DOR Social Security Programs Section, spoke about the role of DOR’s Work Incentives Planners, provided an overview of DOR’s pilot to expand Work Incentive Planning (WIP) services, and highlighted the new “Spotlight on Social Security” monthly newsletter and webinars (reference [Appendix A](#_Appendix_A_–) for the full presentation). Questions from the SRC members and discussion highlights included the following:

* Clarification regarding consumers who did not benefit from WIP planning services. Each consumer’s situation is highly individualized and the role of the WIP planner is to provide information that is specific to the consumer and their employment goals.
* The WIP pilot did not add new staff positions; rather the service delivery model was changed. WIP planners with a non-intensive case load can now serve more consumers by offering workshops and providing resources.
* The DB 101 website is a helpful resource for WIP planners and DOR consumers.
* The duration of the pilot is one year, at which time DOR will conduct an evaluation and determine if and how to implement the pilot statewide.
* WIP planners can provide information and counseling to consumers who participate in Section 8 housing programs.
* WIP planners do refer consumers to Independent Living Centers.
* It is important to provide consumers with information about overpayments before they happen.
* Currently, DOR does not provide incentives to Community Rehabilitation Programs to bring on certified WIP planner staff.

Public comment: Gina Griffiths, Assistant Director of Community Inclusion, World Institute of Disability, spoke about the benefits of the DB 101 website.

# Item 5: Unified State Plan Committee

Peter Frangel, DOR Strategic Initiatives Officer, and DOR Planning Unit Research Analysts, Marla Harper and Judy Gonzalez, presented the findings from the 2021 – 2023 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (reference [Appendix B](#_Appendix_B_–) for the full presentation). Background information was provided on the reporting requirements, timeline, and purpose of the CSNA. Three high-level themes, nine findings, and corresponding suggestions for outreach were presented:

* Theme one: Underserved
	+ Finding: individuals experiencing homelessness
	+ Finding: youth experiencing homelessness
	+ Finding: foster youth
* Theme two: Diversity and equity
	+ Finding: better serve Black/African American individuals with behavioral health disabilities
	+ Finding: providing a safe place for LGBTQ+ individuals
* Theme: Service to consumers
	+ Finding: Providing satisfactory services to students
	+ Finding: placing consumers in careers with living wages
	+ Finding: fully utilizing AJCC co-enrollment opportunities
	+ Finding: providing sufficient CRP coverage

Suggestions and comments from the SRC members included the following:

* It was suggested to look at consumer age when analyzing the top five occupation placements and living wage data.
* Important to provide staff with training on unconscious bias, customer service, diversity, effective communication between staff and consumers.
* Connect with the California Reducing Disparities Program.
* Ensure DOR is included in workgroups that will work on implementing SB 326 and SB 549; employment is included as a goal with behavioral health programs/services.
* Define “self-advocacy” when reaching out to students.
* Reach foster youth by connecting with the Independent Living Centers and foster youth liaisons at the county and state level.

Prior to the November 29 – 30, 2023 SRC quarterly meeting, the SRC Unified State Plan Committee will meet to discuss the state plan goals and priorities, which are developed based on the CSNA findings. The final CSNA report will be submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration in December 2023.

# Item 6: Intersection of Retention Plans and the Order of Selection

State VR agencies may elect to serve individuals at risk of losing employment outside the Order of Selection (OOS) and provide VR services needed for the individual to retain employment. In June 2022, the SRC began discussing the following policy question: *If DOR implements an OOS with closed categories, would DOR support the provision of VR services to individuals who reapply and require services to maintain/retain employment even though the individual would otherwise be assigned to a waiting list?* As a follow-up to the June 2022 discussion, Nancy Wentling, Chief of the DOR VR Policy and Resource Division, joined the SRC to provide a refresh overview on the OOS and give an update on retention services (reference [Appendix C](#_Appendix_C_–) for the full presentation). Information was provided on the intent of OOS, the priority categories and how they are determined, what happens when an OOS is implemented, post-employment services before and after October 4, 2022, and supporting individuals with retaining employment. Questions and comments from the SRC members included the following:

* Confirmed that it is a small number of consumers who fit into the category of needing post-employment services. As such, it would be reasonable for DOR to support post-employment services (even though the individual would otherwise be assigned to a waiting list).
* What are the potential impacts – are there fiscal impacts, would it prevent other consumers from receiving services? The impact would likely be small. DOR hasn’t closed a category in many fiscal years.
* Essentially, electing this provision would be correcting an unintended consequence due to a rule change.

# Item 7: Directorate Report

Joe Xavier, DOR Director, and Victor Duron, DOR Chief Deputy Director, joined the SRC to report on leadership and policy topics of interest. Director Xavier began by highlighting the following commemorations:

* Acknowledging SRC members Benjamin Aviles, Kecia Weller, and Nicolas Wavrin for their service on the SRC
* Labor Day (September 4)
* Suicide Prevention Awareness Month (September)
* Patriot Day (September 11)
* National Rehabilitation Awareness Week (September 18 – 24)
* California Memorial Project - commemorating those who died in state hospitals (September 18)
* Native American Day (September 22)

On September 6, 2023, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order [N-12-23](https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/AI-EO-No.12-_-GGN-Signed.pdf) to prepare California for the progress of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. Thoughts were shared on how to be intentional about discussing AI and learning from the past.

National Updates

* Dante Allen was nominated in 2022 and renominated in January 2023 as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Allen has bipartisan support. Details regarding his appointment confirmation are TBD.
* DOR requested and received $45 million in reallotment funding, along with reallotment funding for the Older Individuals who are Blind program. Director Xavier spoke about the impact and utilization of these funds.

State Updates

* Every emergency disaster occurs locally – it is important to be prepared both personally and professionally. Encourage your networks to be prepared as well.
* Update on the Governor’s budget.
* Update on the Mental Health Services Modernization Act (SB 326 – Eggman) and the March 2024 bond initiative (AB 531 – Irwin).
* Governor Newsom’s [Executive Order N-11-23](https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/8.31.23-Career-Education-Executive-Order.pdf), the Master Plan for Career Education and DOR Directorate’s attendance at signing event.

Department Updates

Victor Duron, DOR Chief Deputy Director, gave the following department updates:

* Report out on DOR’s performance indicators.
* Chief Deputy Director Duron’s appointment was confirmed by Senate vote.
* Update on salaries for SVRP-QRPs and state employees.
* The State Internship Program is now permanent.
* The DOR executive team is fully staffed.
* Partnership with the California Public Utilities Commission speech assistive technology program.
* 60th anniversary of DOR and 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act
* Update on the Consumer Payment Card program.
* Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, and behavioral health initiatives, are underway.

The DOR Directorate and SRC members discussed the following topics:

* Idea that DOR consider options/opportunities for consumers to provide staffing for board and care residential programs, thereby creating both a self-employment opportunity for the consumer, and housing opportunities for people with disabilities.
* Potential use of AI in programs such as vocational rehabilitation and special education.
* Information on Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz).

# Item 8: American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreting Services

DOR representatives presented an overview of how ASL interpreting services is provided to both DOR staff and consumers (reference [Appendix D](#_Appendix_D_–) for the full presentation). Janelle Tisher, Resources Specialist, DOR Community Resources Development (CRD) Section and Craig Rubenstein, Manager, DOR Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section (DHHS), introduced themselves. Tisher explained that the DOR CRD Section is responsible for the DOR Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) that provide fee-for-service, core rehabilitation services to DOR consumers, including ASL. A challenge has been the rate paid for ASL interpreting which has not been adjusted since 2016, causing difficulty with procuring services, especially for short notice and weekend requests. To alleviate this challenge, effective August 1, 2023, the rates were adjusted and now DOR staff will use the interpreting agency’s rate sheet to determine the amount authorized. SRC members and Tisher discussed ASL interpreter availability, informing vendors of the rate change, and bandwidth challenges with virtual interpreting.

Rubenstein explained that ASL interpreting services for DOR employees are provided by Support Services Assistant-Interpreter (SSA-I) staff who are also DOR employees. If a local SSA-I is not available, the DHHS explores options like accessing ASL interpreters through an administrative contract or service order with an external vendor, and utilizing SSA-Is located in other DOR Districts. SRC members and Rubenstein discussed how high cost of living and transportation areas impacts ASL interpreter availability, the use of Video Remote Interpreting (VRI), challenges with filling positions due to low salaries, and the increasing preference of ASL interpreters to work from home and provide interpreting virtually.

# Recess

The SRC quarterly meeting recessed until 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 7, 2023.

# SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

# Item 9: Reconvene, Welcome, and Introductions

Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, reconvened the meeting. SRC members and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

# Item 10: Public Comment

Matt Baker, DOR Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) Manager, shared information about YLF, a week-long self-advocacy and leadership development program for students with disabilities.

# Item 11: California Department of Education (CDE) Initiatives

Nicolas Wavrin, CDE Education Programs Consultant, Special Education Division, and SRC Member, presented on current CDE initiatives (reference [Appendix E](#_Appendix_E_–) for the full presentation). Topics included the alternative pathway to a high school diploma initiative, the expansion of Family Empowerment Centers, SB 531 - fingerprinting and background checks, and AB 438 - postsecondary goals and transitions services. Questions from the SRC members and discussion highlights included the following:

* Additional information/clarification on the California Alternative Assessment.
* Do students need to know in ninth grade which pathway they will pursue?
* IPE teams have the option to waive local graduate requirements, and instead have students meet State requirements.

# Item 12: Adopt-a-District Report Outs

SRC members reported out from their recent Adopt-a-Region discussions.

Susan Henderson, SRC Member, connected with Della Randolph, Regional Director, DOR Greater East Bay District. The district is impacted by the Support Services Assistant-Interpreter (SSA-I) shortage, due in part to low-wages and the fact that SSA-I positions are not full-time. District partnerships are taking place with local behavioral health agencies, including Contra Costa Mental Health Services, and Alameda County Behavioral Health Services which offers a fee for service structure. The district is excited about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, youth transitions, and upcoming in-person events.

Kecia Weller, SRC Treasurer, connected with Denise McKnight, District Administrator, DOR Van Nuys/Foothill District. There are several staff vacancies in the district and efforts are underway to rebuild the district’s team of SVRC-QPRs. The district is offering cross-training opportunities for their personnel staff. Consumers with computers are using DOR’s online portal to apply for services; however, it has been observed that some consumers are not completing the application correctly. A challenge for the district are vendors who submit invoices without the needed reports and assessments attached.

Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, connected with Robert Loeun, Regional Director, DOR Inland Empire District. The District Administrator, Alfonso Jimenez, is being temporarily reassigned to serve as DOR’s Acting Chief of Strategic Partnerships. The rate change has improved access to ASL interpreting services, especially in rural areas. The district is focusing on adult work experience, and a partnership with Hyatt Hotels. The district is excited about their successful case closure rate.

Benjamin Aviles also connected with Daphne Leake, District Administrator, DOR Los Angeles South Bay District. The rate change has improved access to ASL interpreting services for the LA South Bay District as well. Challenges include filling vacant SVRC-QRP positions, and sometimes motivating consumers can be challenging. The district is working on connecting with local behavioral health agencies, implementing adult work experience, and focusing on higher education offerings and livable wages for underserved communities.

Nick Wavrin, SRC Member, connected with Erwin Petilla, District Administrator, DOR Greater Los Angeles District. A challenge for the district is increasing intakes and outcomes. The district has a fully staffed Student Services team and is serving as the pilot district in which DOR staff will manage a caseload of consumers focused on civil service employment. The district holds quarterly meetings with the Regional Centers. The district uses labor market information to assist consumers. The district has an initiative with the California Conservation Corps which has helped increase outcomes for youth.

Nick Wavrin also connected with Peter Dawson, Regional Director, DOR Blind Field Services (BFS). Nick learned about BFS and how it is a unique, statewide program. Providing services remotely is working well for BFS, and the district has received its highest number of applications. BFS has the highest consumer wages of any District, at $30/per hour. BFS invests in quality employment placement. A challenge is the high demand on the BFS procurement team. Future opportunities include having BFS connect with California Special Education Local Plan Areas.

Theresa Comstock, SRC Member, connected with David Wayte, Regional Director, DOR Redwood Empire District. Successes include American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting, specifically:

* During the last two years, the district has had adequate access to ASL, especially with remote interpreting.
* When there are last-minute cancellations, the district’s contractor has been able to secure alternates.
* Hired an ASL Interpreter within the district who is assigned to a particular counselor through the reasonable accommodation process.
* The district’s contractor (“Focus”) has been able to provide interpreters for in-person meetings and events, including a homeless outreach event in March 2023 at the Memorial Auditorium.

Challenges for the Redwood Empire District include mental health partnerships, specifically:

* Understaffing in county behavioral health agencies, and in some DOR offices.
* Connecting with behavioral health leadership
* A contract with a Community Based Organization (CBO) was discontinued by the Shasta Behavioral Health Agency, ending the mental health cooperative relationship with DOR.
* Increasing collaborations – a few counties refer individuals to DOR, but are not interested in partnering.

Theresa Comstock also connected with Brian Winic, Regional Director, and Justin McIntire, District Administrator, DOR Santa Barbara District. Challenges for the District include ASL interpreting. There is an across-the-board shortage, and since the COVID-19 pandemic, ASL interpreters prefer to work remotely. ASL interpreters often come from other locations as the cost of living in the Santa Barbara region is high. Other challenges related to ASL include that staff often need two ASL interpreters, and remote ASL interpreting can be challenging as the video does not keep up with the speed of the interpreter. Other challenges in the district include the need to move three of the local offices. The district has experienced an increase in successful closures, and they continue to work on rapid engagement. The district is making process with filling vacancies.

Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair, connected with Jeffrey Noyes, District Administrator, DOR San Diego District. The recent rate change should improve access to ASL interpreting. There are still challenges with filling the SSA-I positions. Efforts are taking place to develop courses that will help individuals obtain competitive, integrated employment. The district has been receiving many referrals through their partnership with the local county behavioral health agency, provides rapid engagement, and utilizes the individual placement and support model. The district is experiencing high caseloads.

Chanel Brisbane, SRC Member, connected with Sherri Han-Lam, Regional Director, DOR Orange/San Gabriel District. Successes include a recent ADA celebration featuring a DOR consumer. A focus area for the district is increasing referrals from the Asian-American community. The district wants to increase services to students. Sector-based caseloads have been successful. The district has a partnership with the Orange County local behavioral health agency and the district is open to working with other clinics as well. ASL interpreting has not been a significant challenge as they have SVRP-QRPs in the District who can provide ASL interpreting, and the rate adjustment will help increase availability.

Lisa Hayes, SRC Member, connected with Shayn Anderson, Regional Director, DOR San Joaquin Valley District. Discussion highlights included the following:

* Staffing vacancies have improved, there are less than five open positions in the district.
* The district is receiving referrals from Corcoran State Prison.
* The district is involved in the Native American Affinity Groups.
* SVRC-QRPs are assisting consumers with obtaining apprenticeships.
* Expedited enrollment and implementation of the CalDOR Consumer Payment Card is going well.

Challenges include the need to improve the connection between DOR Central Office and the District.

# Item 13: SRC Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

The DOR Planning Unit team, Peter Frangel, Marla Harper, and Judy Gonzalez presented on the specific 2022 Consumer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) results below and to discuss opportunities for improvement for the CSS moving forward (reference [Appendix F](#_Appendix_F:_Consumer) for the full presentation).

2022 CSS results of concern:

1. Potentially eligible participants reporting “only somewhat satisfied with employment guidance (71.1% score) they received from their counselor”,
2. Additional insight regarding the “lack of desired jobs” reported as a reason for unemployment, and
3. Data on the average amount of time from when a consumer enters VR to obtaining employment.

Feedback and suggestions from the SRC members included the following:

* Add an option, like a comments box, so consumers can provide details when they select “lack of desired jobs” as the reason for unemployment.
* Research how DOR’s average length of time from when a consumer enters VR to obtaining employment compares to other states.
* Utilize texting as a survey distribution method.
* Have a comment box after every question.
* Increase the survey’s response rate.
	+ Determine how and why the current sample size was selected.
	+ Have SVRP-QPRs reach out to consumers and students directly and request that they complete the survey.
	+ Individual emails to consumers are more effective. Perhaps a State Internship Program intern could assist with this.
	+ Survey links in emails can be problematic.
	+ Many students are learning about online safety and may be hesitant to complete an online survey. Need buy-in of parents.
	+ Make sure people know the survey is coming.
	+ Emphasize that the goal of the survey is to improve services.
	+ Assure consumers that their responses are anonymous.

The Planning Unit asked that the SRC submit their requested changes to the CSS by February 2024. Kate Bjerke, SRC Executive Officer, will compile the SRC’s suggestions in a memorandum.

# Item 14: Outgoing Member Recognition

SRC members, DOR staff and guests recognized outgoing members Benjamin Aviles, Nicolas Wavrin and Kecia Weller for their dedicated service on the SRC. Highlights included the following:

Kecia Weller

* Appointed by Governor Brown to the SRC as a Disability Advocacy Group representative on October 13, 2017.
* Reappointed by Governor Newsom on September 3, 2020
* SRC leadership positions – Treasurer and Policy Committee Chair.
* Throughout her tenure on the SRC, Kecia shared her expertise and perspective as the National co-chair of the Peer Support Network, as a member of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, a Self-advocacy and Community Liaison at the UCLA Tarjan Center, and member of the California Statewide Self-Advocacy Network.

Benjamin Aviles

* Appointed by Governor Brown on August 13, 2018, as the Current or Former Consumer representative on the SRC.
* Reappointed by Governor Newsom on September 3, 2020,
* SRC leadership positions – Treasurer and Chair.
* Benjamin brought a critical perspective to the SRC regarding benefits planning, community engagement, experience as a DOR consumer, and as a Financial Professional at World Financial Group.

Nick Wavrin

* Appointed by Governor Brown on June 15, 2018, as the California Department of Education representative on the SRC.

Was reappointed by Governor Newsom on September 3, 2020.

* SRC leadership positions – Vice Chair
* Nick’s expertise and guidance has been instrumental as DOR designed, implemented, and works to continuously improve and expand pre-employment transition services for youth and students with disabilities. Nick frequently shared updates on CDE initiatives and the Transition Partnership and Workability Programs and identified opportunities for collaboration and innovation. He was a dedicated member of the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint workgroup.

# Item 15: Debrief and Recommendations Discussion

SRC members debriefed from the meeting discussions. Highlights included the following:

Policy Topic – Client Assistant Program Information

Remind DOR VRED leadership that information on the Client Assistance Program should be displayed in all DOR Offices.

Policy Topic - Benefits Planning

The fundamentals of benefits planning are on the DB 101 website. The basics of benefits planning could be taught to all SVRC-QRPs who could then provide initial benefits planning information to their consumers. Barriers for consumers can include misinformation and fear, but the DB 101 helps address this. It was suggested that DOR reconnect with DB 101 and World Institute of Disability; that consumers receive information on benefits planning early and to include this information in the IPE and when discussing job goals (example: full vs part time); that DOR WIPs provide consumers with information on independent living centers, and that CRPs be incentivized to have WIPs on staff. Invite DB 101 staff to present on the website at a future meeting.

Motion: It was moved/seconded (Comstock/Weller) that the SRC develop a memo encouraging DOR to support the DB 101 website (Yes – Comstock, Wavrin, Aviles, Guillen, Henderson, Brisbane, Weller, Hayes) (No – 0) (Abstain – 0). (Absent – Robinson, Lewis, Hasak).

Policy Topic – Board and Care Facilities

Theresa Comstock, SRC member, suggested that DOR consider options/opportunities for consumers to provide staffing for board and care residential programs, thereby creating both a self-employment opportunity for the consumer, and housing opportunities for people with disabilities. Comstock suggested that DOR collaborate with other departments to develop a pilot program for self-employment and/or sector-based guidance regarding staffing for board and care facilities that consumers can reference. This could be a model similar to the BEP program. Lisa Hayes, SRC member, shared feedback from the independent living perspective. There is a need to understand more as congregate living in the disability world is a complex issue and the independent living centers advocate for independent living. Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair, and Kate Bjerke, SRC Executive Officer, will connect with Comstock to further explore this concept.

Policy Topic – Order of Selection

Motion: It was moved/seconded (Comstock/Guillen) that the SRC recommend that during an order of selection with closed categories that DOR support the provision of VR services to individuals who reapply and require services to maintain/retain employment even though the individual would otherwise be assigned to a waiting list. (Yes – Comstock, Wavrin, Aviles, Guillen, Henderson, Brisbane); (No – 0); (Absent – Robinson, Lewis, Hasak); (Abstain – Weller).

Policy Topic – State Plan/Comprehensive Statewide Assessment

* Important to provide staff with unconscious bias, customer service and diversity training.
* Connect with the California Reducing Disparities Program
* Ensure DOR is included in workgroups that will work on implementing SB 326 and SB 549; employment is included as a goal with behavioral health programs/services.
* Define “self-advocacy” when reaching out to students.

# Item 16: SRC Officers, Members, and Executive Officer Reports

Benjamin Aviles, SRC Chair, thanked members for their support and comradery. He emphasized that the work of the SRC is important and encouraged the SRC members to keep expanding their networks, stay involved, share information, and participate in events.

Ivan Guillen, SRC Vice-Chair, noted that the Client Assistance Program (CAP) is conducting meet and greet sessions with DOR offices throughout California. Recently, two new CAP advocates joined in the Los Angeles area.

Kecia Weller, SRC Treasurer, said that she enjoyed serving on the SRC and learned a lot. Kecia gave the quarterly Treasurer’s report-out.

Nicolas Wavrin, SRC member, said there are no additional Department of Education updates from the presentation given earlier in the day. Wavrin said it was an honor to serve on the SRC and hopes to stay in touch.

Theresa Comstock, SRC member, reported on the Behavioral Health Services Act, which would replace the Mental Health Services Act.

Chanel Brisbane, SRC member, expressed her thanks to outgoing members Aviles, Wavrin and Weller. She noted that October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) month.

Lisa Hayes, SRC member, reported on State Independent Living Council (SILC) activities:

* The SILC met on August 8 – 9, 2023.
* The National Council on Independent Living Conference was held the week of July 24, 2023 and legislative priorities were identified.
* The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) committees are working on policy issues and funding formula revisions.
* The DOR Independent Living Section provided a much-needed enhancement to ILC funding for the next two grant cycles.
* The SILC received a positive report from the Department of Developmental Services on partnerships to move individuals out of sub-minimum wage jobs into competitive integrated employment.
* The California Department of Social Services continues to explore opportunities to strengthen the Personal Care Assistant Services workforce.
* Hayes’ term as SILC Chair has ended and she is therefore resigning from the SRC.

# Item 17: Annual Election of the SRC Officers

Kate Bjerke, SRC Executive Officer, reviewed the process for the annual election of the SRC officers. Before announcement of the slate of candidates, the floor was opened for additional nominations. There were no additional nominations, and the slate of candidates was announced: Chair: Ivan Guillen, Vice-Chair: Chanel Brisbane, and Treasurer: La Trena Robinson. It was moved/approved (Weller/Wavrin) to elect the slate of candidates recommended by the SRC Nominating Committee on June 29, 2023. (Yes – Comstock, Wavrin, Aviles, Guillen, Henderson, Brisbane, Weller, Hayes), (No – 0), (Abstain – 0), (Absent - Robinson, Lewis, Hasak).

# Adjourn

It was moved/seconded (Henderson/Weller) to adjourn the September 6 – 7, 2023 SRC quarterly meeting.

# Appendix A – Benefits Planning Presentation

(Slide One) Work Incentives Planning (WIP) Services Expansion Pilot.

(Slide Two) Agenda

* DOR Work Incentive Planners and Work Incentives Planning Services
* WIP Services Expansion Pilot
* New Training and Outreach Resources
	+ Spotlight on Social Security Newsletter
	+ DOR Webinars on Social Security Programs and Work Incentives

(Slide Three) Purpose of WIP Services for DOR consumers receiving SSI and/or SSDI Benefits

* To support and empower DOR consumers to make informed choices about their employment goals.
* To assist in understanding how to bridge the gap between Social Security benefits and employment.
* To provide the information individuals and their families need to feel confident about their employment options and their future.

(Slide Four) Work Incentives Planning Services

* Assisting consumers with understanding the impact of employment on cash and health benefits.
* Developing accurate and personalized Benefits Summary and Analyses and Work Incentives Plans.
* Providing recommendations on appropriate work incentives.
* Assisting with wage reporting, financial literacy, and benefits management.
* Coordinating referrals to Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Projects and/or Employment Networks.

(Slide Five) DOR Work Incentives Planners (WIPs)

* Provide individualized services on available work incentives.
* Address unmet need for consumers receiving vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.
* Currently, 33 WIPs provide, throughout the 14 DOR Districts, Work Incentive Planning Services to approximately 3,000 DOR consumers receiving SSI and/or SSDI at any given time.

(Slide Six) Background – WIP Services Ongoing and Expansion Pilot

* Ongoing WIP Services to consumers finishing up training, ready to work, or employer.
	+ Narrow criteria limits the number of consumers served by WIPs.
* WIP Services Expansion Pilot provides WIP services to eligible individuals regardless of readiness or employment status.
	+ Inland Empire, Santa Barbara, and San Joaquin Valley

(Slide Seven) Pilot Objectives

* For individuals receiving SSI and/or SSDI benefits:
* Provide disability programs information and resources to support informed choice.
* Dispel myths regarding employment’s impact on cash and health benefits.
* Reach more consumers earlier in their VR journey.
* Increase successful employment outcomes.
* Increase the number of individuals employed with earnings above SGA.
* Decrease consumer reliance on federal and state public support.

(Slide Eight) WIP Services Expansion Model

* Intensive WIP Services Current WIP Model:
* Ready for work or employed, Individualized benefits counseling, BS&A development, on-going support up to closing of the record of services.
* Non-intensive WIP services: introductory-level information, motivation presentations, generalized overview of disability programs and work incentives, WIP workshops.

(Slide Nine) Pilot Goals

* Expand the provision of information and referral benefits planning services for consumers not currently receiving intensive WIP services.
* Increase referrals for WIP Services among all DOR district staff at all levels.
* Increase the awareness and receipt of WIP Services among consumers, beginning when they are determined eligible for VR services.
* Timeframe for Pilot activities: 1 Year

(Slide Ten) Pilot Outreach

* Consumer Referrals
* Phone calls, Emails, Text Messages, Virtual Video Conferencing
* Participation in Job Fairs and Community Workshops
* Dedicated DOR WIP Services Internet page, featuring resources, workshops, and external service information

(Slide Eleven) New! Spotlight on Social Security Newsletter

* The monthly Spotlight on Social Security Newsletter brings news, work incentives information, success stories, and other valuable information for beneficiaries receiving SSI and/or SSDI and their families and the professionals serving them.
* <https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/SSAnewsletter>

(Slide Twelve) New! DOR Webinars on Social Security Programs and Work Incentives

* In June 2023, DOR began offering a series of webinars where industry experts address assorted topics relevant to SSI and SSDI beneficiaries. These webinars are designed to equip individual and their families with the tools, resources, and knowledge helpful for them to become successfully employed.
* Go to our [Webinar Calendar](https://www.dor.ca.gov/home/ssacalendar) to register for future upcoming webinars! <https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/SSAcalendar>

(Slide Thirteen) Webinars Topics

* Managing Your Social Security Benefits Online with a My Social Security Account
* Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS)
* The Benefits Planning Query (BPQY)
* Disability Benefits 101 (DB101.org)
* Wage Reporting

(Slide Fourteen) Pilot Next Steps

* Provide on-going support to the pilot districts.
* Conduct monthly meetings with pilot districts to discuss success stories, challenges, and best practices.
* Track pilot outcomes.
* Report pilot progress to Executive Staff and stakeholder advisory committees when requested.

(Slide Fifteen) Q&A

# Appendix B – Planning Unit Presentation on the Comprehensive Statewide Assessment for State Fiscal Years 2020-23

Slide 1: Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment: Findings

SFYs 2020-23

Prepared by DOR Planning Unit

Slide 2: Goal for Today’s Presentation:

* Present and review the CSNA findings.
* Discuss findings and answer questions.
* Develop potential recommendations.

Slide 3: What is the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)?

* Required by the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the WIOA.
* A triennial study to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in California.
* Developed by the DOR in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).
* Research that informs DOR’s understanding of individuals with disabilities and their service needs and contributes to the goals and priorities of DOR’s State Plan.

Slide 4: CSNA Reporting Requirements

Assess Vocational Rehabilitation Needs

* Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities
* Individuals with Disabilities who are Minorities, Unserved, or Underserved by VR
* Individuals with Disabilities who are served through the Workforce Development System
* Youth and Students with Disabilities

Identify the Need to Establish, Develop, and Improve

* Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)

Slide 5: CSNA Timelines

* Brainstorm and Develop Research Plan
* Conduct quantitative data collection and analysis.
* Conduct qualitative data collection and analysis.
* Develop results based on data analysis.
* Use results to facilitate development of recommendations with stakeholders. (Current Progress)
* Share recommendations with Tri-Deputies and SRC (Fall 2023)
* Complete final report and submit it to RSA (Dec 2023)

Slide 6: Themes Identified during the Assessment

Three high-level themes have been identified for the 9 findings presented today:

* Underserved (3 findings)
* Diversity and Equity (2 findings)
* Service to Consumers (4 findings)

Slide 7: Theme: Un/Underserved - Homelessness

How can DOR inform and attract more individuals experiencing homelessness?

The number of homeless ages 18-64 with disabilities during 2022 was 105,600.

The average number of homeless applications received by DOR for state fiscal years 2020-21 through 2022-23 was 1,900.

Barriers to getting or maintaining jobs:

* Finances; fear of losing government benefits; lack of family support, job skills, physical access to job locations, and more.

Training desired:

* Apprenticeships, vocational, computer/tech

Slide 8: Theme: Un/Underserved - Youth Homelessness

How can DOR inform and attract youth experiencing homelessness?

The number of individuals experiencing homelessness under the age of 18 during 2022 was 67,000.

The average number of homeless applications under the age of 18 was 11.

Barriers to employment:

* No driver's license; lack of job skills, family support, physical access to job location

Training desired:

* College/university, Apprenticeship, or on-the-job training

Slide 9: Theme: Un/Underserved - Foster Youth

How can DOR inform and attract foster youth?

There are approximately 13,000 Foster Youth ages 16-21 in California.

DOR receives an average of 290 applications from foster youth annually.

Barriers to employment:

* Lack of driver’s license/transportation, lack of job skills, fear of losing government benefits

Training desired:

* College/University, apprenticeship, or on-the-job training

Slide 10: Suggestions for Outreach

* QRPs to go into community where people congregate, inform what DOR offers. (Grocery stores, churches, etc.)
* Collaborate with community partners, shelters, mental health providers, etc.
* Partnerships with schools, youth organizations, justice/juvenile justice, employment agencies.
* Identify and outreach to specific programs and agencies offering services to foster youth and foster youth transitioning out of foster care.

Slide 11: Suggestions for Outreach (continued)

* Districts to gather and develop resources for underserved groups.
* Outreach and marketing materials at schools and colleges. Hold outreach events.
* Campaigns and/or special teams to best serve foster youth, justice-involved, homeless.
* Hire QRPs with lived experience to conduct outreach.

Slide 12: Questions and Comments

Blank slide

Slide 13: Theme: Diversity and Equity - Behavioral Health - Black/African American

How can DOR better serve Black/African American individuals with behavioral health disabilities?

Table 1: Percent of Race with Behavioral Health Disability

| **Race** | **Percent of Race** |
| --- | --- |
| Black or African American  | 40% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native  | 36% |
| Race Not Reported | 35% |
| Two or More Races | 33% |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander  | 32% |
| White  | 32% |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 31% |
| Asian  | 27% |

* Forty percent of Black/African American consumers have a behavioral health disability, greater than any other race.
* Black/African American consumers over-represented in population of individuals with behavioral health disabilities. (18.8%)

Slide 14: Theme: Diversity and Equity - LGBTQ+ and DEIA - (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility)

Are we providing a safe space for LGBTQ+?

The percentage of applicants, especially youth applicants, who do not provide gender information has increased in recent years.

Table 3: Percentage of Applicants who select “Does Not Wish to Identify.”

| **State Fiscal Year** | **Percentage** |
| --- | --- |
| 2020-21 | 0.49% |
| 2021-22 | 1.18% |
| 2022-23 | 2.21% |

Slide 15: Suggestions for Diversity and Equity

* Career path leading to independence and living wages, especially for Black/African Americans.
* LGBTQ+ and DEIA etiquette training for staff and partners for gender-sensitive person-center service provision, and ability to document preferences.
* DOR Team to further engage in consumers’ desired quality employment outcome with a focus on informed choice.
* Collaboration with parole/probation agencies, mental health programs offering supports/services.

Slide 16: Questions and Comments

Blank slide for notes

Slide 17: Theme: Service to Consumers - Trainings and Services - Students

Are we providing satisfactory services to students?

Table 4: Importance and Satisfaction with Services to Students

| **PE Service** | **Importance Rating** | **Satisfaction Rating** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Skills For Work\* | 98.5% | 81.4% |
| Work Experience | 98.5% | 86.1% |
| Job and Career Exploration | 97.8% | 84.8% |
| Self-Advocacy\* | 94.7% | 72.0% |
| Counseling (after high school) | 94.7% | 80.5% |

Per youth survey respondents:

* Skills for Work: While 98.5% found this service as important, only 81.4% were satisfied with the services received.
* Self-advocacy: While 94.7% found this service as important, only 72.0% were satisfied with the services received.

Slide 18: Theme: Service to Consumers – Top Occupations

Are we placing consumers in careers with living wages?

4 of the top 5 occupational placements of consumers are at less than living wages.

Living wage for 2023 is $44,179.

Table 5: Top 5 Occupational Placements with Yearly Wages

| **Occupation** | **Wages** |
| --- | --- |
| Customer Service Representative | $45,739 |
| Stock and Order Filler | $38,314 |
| Helper, Production | $38,085 |
| Office Clerk | $43,784 |
| Janitors, Cleaners | $38,043 |

Slide 19: Theme: Service to Consumers - AJCC Collaborations

Are we fully utilizing AJCC co-enrollment opportunities?

AJCC services have a high satisfaction rate from co-enrolled consumers, however there is a very low number of participants receiving AJCC services.

* Only 20% of survey respondents received AJCC services.
* Over 90% found AJCC services helpful or very helpful.

Slide 20: Theme: Service to Consumers - CRP Service and Coverage

Is there sufficient CRP coverage?

* Most consumers in rural areas do not have access to CRP locations.
* The number of CRPs across all areas of California are insufficient to meet demands.

Slide 21: Suggestions for Service to Consumers

* Evaluate Skills for Work and Self-Advocacy services for increased satisfaction.
* Increase employment goals and placements in careers with living wages.
* Increase collaborations and co-enrollment opportunities with AJCCs.
* Need for geographical evaluation to optimize and leverage CRP availability in underserved areas.

Slide 22: Questions and Comments

Blank Slide.

Slide 23: Next Steps – Questions

Next Steps:

* Develop final recommendations.
* Share final recommendations with Tri-Deputies and SRC Fall 2023
* Complete final report and submit it to RSA *(Dec 2023)*

Slide 24: DOR’s Planning Unit - Contact Information

Peter Frangel

Executive Advisor

Luis Lewis

Staff Services Manager I – Specialist

Marla Harper

Research Data Analyst II

Judy Gonzalez

Research Data Analyst II

Antoinette Deboisblanc

Associate Governmental Program Analyst

# Appendix C – OOS, Post-employment Services, Employment Retention

Slide 1

Order of Selection

Post-employment Services

Employment Retention

Presented by DOR Program Policy Section

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting

September 6, 2023

Slide 2 – The Intent of Order of Selection

* Provide an organized and equitable method to serve individuals with disabilities if it is anticipated that all eligible individuals who apply for VR services cannot be served.
* Serve to manage the resources available for the provision of VR services for each fiscal year.
* Assure that priority for VR services is given to individuals with the most significant disabilities.
* Assure statewideness.

Slide 3 – How are Priority Categories Determined?

1. Does an eligible individual’s impairment create a serious limitation *(impediment or barrier)* in terms of an employment outcome?

* The Rehabilitation Counselor will consider the impact of an individual’s impairment(s) in six “Functional Capacity Areas,” including communication, interpersonal skills, mobility, self-care, work skills, and work tolerance.

2. Are multiple VR services are needed to reach the employment outcome?

* For the purposes of this assessment, “Multiple vocational rehabilitation services” means two or more VR services, not including counseling and guidance, services to family members, and transportation.

3. Is an extended period is required for providing VR services?

* For the purposes of this assessment, “Extended period” means more than six months.

Slide 4 – What are the Priority Categories?

* Priority Category One: eligible individual with a most significant disability.
* Priority Category Two: eligible individual with a significant disability.
* Priority Category Three: eligible individual who does not meet criteria for Category One or Two.
* If an eligible individual is receiving supported employment services, they are considered an individual with a most significant disability (Priority Category One).
* If an eligible individual has been determined by the Social Security Administration to be eligible for SSI and/or SSDI, they are considered an individual with a significant disability (Priority Category Two).

Slide 5 – Upon Implementation of an Order of Selection

* Eligible individuals whose Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) was written and signed prior to implementation will continue to receive services necessary to complete their IPE.
* Individuals who were determined eligible prior to implementation, but for whom the IPEs have not been written and signed, shall be assigned to a priority category.
* Students with disabilities who were receiving DOR Student Services and have not yet been determined eligible for VR services prior to implementation shall continue to receive such services regardless of the Order of Selection.

Slide 6 – Prior to 10/14/22: Post-employment Services

Post-employment services were provided:

1. After a record of services was closed successfully, **and**,
2. Later, the individual contacted DOR to request additional services to retain, advance in, or regain employment.
* Provided under an amended IPE; thus, a re-determination of eligibility was not required.
* Limited in scope and duration.
* Available to meet rehabilitation needs that did not require a complex and comprehensive provision of services.

Slide 7 – After 10/14/22: Post-employment Services

RSA clarified that federal regulations define post-employment services as one or more VR services provided:

* *Subsequent to* the achievement of an employment outcome and
* *Before* the individual exits the VR program.

Services are determined necessary for an individual with a disability to prepare for, obtain, retain, or advance in employment, consistent with their primary employment factors and informed choice

Slide 8 – Supporting Individuals to Retain Employment

* To establish eligibility for VR services, the applicant must require VR services to prepare for, obtain, retain, or advance in employment consistent with the applicant’s primary employment factors and informed choice.
* Retaining employment is part of our charge in supporting individuals with disabilities to obtain meaningful, satisfying employment so they can participate in their communities of choice.

Slide 9 – Question for Consideration

Background: State VR agencies may elect to serve individuals at risk of losing employment outside the Order of Selection and provide VR services needed for the individual to retain employment.

Question: If DOR implements an Order of Selection with closed categories, would DOR support the provision of VR services to individuals who reapply and require services to retain employment even though the individual would otherwise be assigned to a waiting list?

# Appendix D – American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreting Services for DOR Consumers and Staff

Slide 1 – American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreting Services for DOR Consumers and Staff

September 6, 2023 SRC Meeting

DOR logo

Slide 2 – Presenter Introductions

* Janelle Tisher, Resources Specialist, DOR Community Resources Development Section
* Craig Rubenstein, Manager, DOR Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program

Slide 3 – Presentation Overview

* Overview of how ASL interpreting services are provided for DOR consumers.
* Overview of how ASL interpreting services are provided for DOR staff.
* Open discussion and Q&A to explore collaboration opportunities, identify policy solutions and a path forward.

Slide 4 – ASL Interpreting Services for DOR Consumers

* Provided by an outside vendor or contractor as a “fee for service.”
* Managed locally with technical assistance provided by the DOR Community Resources Division team.
* Effective August 1st, interpreting rate adjustments were implemented for ASL interpreting and tactile interpreting services.
	+ DOR staff will now use the interpreting agency’s rate sheet to determine the amount authorized.
	+ The intent of this change is for DOR to pay interpreting agencies the rates required to ensure services are available and delivered in a timely manner.

Slide 5 – ASL Interpreting Services for DOR Staff

* ASL interpreting services are provided by Support Services Assistant-Interpreters (SSA-Is) who are DOR employees recruited by the hiring manager or supervisor.
	+ Technical assistance is provided by the DOR Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program.
* DOR does not have jurisdiction or authority over SSA-I pay rates.
* If local SSA-Is are not available, alternative options include:
	+ Arranging ASL interpreting services through an administrative contract or Service order with an external vendor.
	+ Utilizing SSA-Is from other districts via Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).
* DOR staff members who are not Deaf or Hard of Hearing can utilize SSA-Is as a reasonable accommodation to effectively communicate with individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

Slide 6 – Discussion and Q&A

* What feedback and input have the SRC members received on this topic during recent Adopt-a-Region discussions?
* What questions do the SRC members have?
* How can the SRC serve as a resource or partner with DOR as it relates to ASL interpreting services?
* What policy solutions should be considered?

# Appendix E – California Department of Education Initiatives

Slide 1 – California Department of Education Initiatives

California Department of Education

Tony Thurmond, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

CDE Logo

Slide 2 – Overview

* Alternative Pathway to a High School Diploma and Senate Bill 114
* Alternate Coursework and Senate Bill 154
* Expansion of Family Empowerment Centers
* Assembly Bills Pertaining to Special Education
	+ Senate Bill 531 – Fingerprinting and Background Checks
	+ Assembly Bill 438 – Early Transition Services
* Questions

Slide 3 – Alternative Pathway in California *Education Code*

* Assembly Bill 181, the 2021-22 education omnibus budget trailer bill, added California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 51225.31, which went into effect June 30, 2022.
* Students with exceptional needs can graduate from high school through a newly defined diploma pathway by meeting certain criteria.
* These students are exempted from all local coursework and other requirements in addition to state coursework requirements.
* Through completion of state coursework requirements, the local education agency (LEA) must award the student with a diploma of graduation from high school.

Slide 4 – Senate Bill 114 and the Alternative Pathway

* Students with exceptional needs, who entered ninth grade in the 2022-23 school year or later, attending a school district, county office of education, charter school or state special school can graduate from high school by meeting the following criteria:
	+ 1) The student is eligible to take the California Alternative Assessment, and
	+ 2) The student is required to complete state standards-aligned coursework to meet statewide course requirements.
* The award of the diploma of graduation via the alternative pathway under *EC* 51225.31 does not change or terminate an LEA’s obligation to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to an eligible special education student.

Slide 5 – Alternate Coursework Workgroup

* Senate Bill 154 authorizes a workgroup to develop alternative coursework, resources, and performance tasks for students who are not eligible for the California Alternate Assessment and may benefit from demonstrating completion of state graduation requirements through alternate means.
* The workgroup will provide the resources and coursework options to the Legislature by June 30, 2024.

Slide 6 – Expansion of Family Empowerment Centers (1 of 2)

* Family Empowerment Centers (FEC) were established by the CDE in 2001, through Senate Bill 511, which added California EC Sections 56400-56414.
* FECs are nonprofit organizations that offer specialized training, peer-to-peer support, information and referral services.
* There were initially 12 and two more were added in 2006 for a total of 14.

Slide 7 – Expansion of Family Empowerment Centers (2 of 2)

* Huge expansion that began in 2022 – there are now 40 FECs throughout the state.
* There is one region that does not possess a center: Lake County
* Procedural Safeguards will be updated to include names of all centers with contact information
* For more information about FECs:
	+ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/qa/caprntorg.asp#fec> or through the CDE’s Technical Assistance Partner:

<https://www.seedsofpartnership.org/fec/index.cfm>

Slide 8 – Bills of Note (1 of 2)

Senate Bill 531 – Fingerprinting and Background Checks

* Related to California Education Code (EC) Section 45125.1, which requires that any entity that has a contract with a local educational agency (LEA) ensures that any employee who interacts with pupils, outside the immediate supervision and control of the pupil’s parent or guardian or a school employee, has a valid criminal records summary.
* Bill proposes the identification of several work experience programs that are exempted from requiring contractors to provide background checks for all their employees, given that certain conditions are met.
* It is estimated that the proposals could ensure student safety while also having a positive impact on employers’ willingness to contract with LEAs and provide work experience for students.

Slide 9 – Bills of Note (2 of 2)

Assembly Bill 438 – Postsecondary Goals and Transition Services

* New iteration of theme – previous bill proposed to move mandatory transition planning from 16 years of age to 14.
* This bill proposes to begin the age of mandatory secondary transition planning upon entering ninth grade.

Slide 10 – Thank you

nwavrin@cde.ca.gov

CDE logo

# Appendix F: Consumer Satisfaction Survey Presentation

## SLIDE 1

Consumer Satisfaction Survey: Discussion of 2022 Survey Results and 2023 Survey Concerns

Presentation

September 7, 2023

State Rehabilitation Council: Monitoring and Evaluation Committee

Prepared By

Planning Unit

Department of Rehabilitation

## SLIDE 2

Consumer Satisfaction Survey

* DOR is responsible for providing high-quality, effective services to its consumers that lead to successful employment outcomes through its Vocational Rehabilitation programs.
* DOR conducts the Consumer Satisfaction Survey annually (in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council).
* This anonymous survey allows consumers to report their satisfaction with services provided by DOR in the previous state fiscal year.
* Results from the survey are shared publicly and used as a tool to help improve DOR’s service delivery process.
* Separate survey results for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) consumers and Potentially Eligible (PE) participants.

## SLIDE 3

Discussion Items

* Potentially eligible participants reporting “only somewhat satisfied with employment guidance (71.1% score) they received from their counselor.”
* Additional insight regarding the “lack of desired jobs” reported as a reason for unemployment.
* Data on the average amount of time from when a consumer enters VR to obtaining employment.
* Survey delivery and administration, including concerns regarding the 2023 CSS response rate and methods to increase survey participation.

## SLIDE 4

Discussion Item 1: Potentially eligible participants reporting “only somewhat satisfied with employment guidance (71.1% score) they received from their counselor.” (1 of 2)

* **Survey Question:** My counselor provided me with guidance and information that helped me understand the jobs in my area and how to get hired by businesses (satisfaction rating scale of not at all satisfied to extremely satisfied).
* **Background:**
	+ Survey created for VR consumers, not for PE participants
	+ VR and PE results separated in 2022
	+ Several employment-related responses not published in Summary Report or Dashboard
	+ PE participants are provided with skills, work-based learning experience, and counseling, not necessarily employment guidance
	+ Question not relevant to PE participants

## SLIDE 5

Discussion Item 1: Potentially eligible participants reporting “only somewhat satisfied with employment guidance (71.1% score) they received from their counselor.” (2 of 2)

* **Resolution:**
	+ For the 2023 CSS, we have redesigned all the PE questions, omitting employment-related questions.
	+ PE survey includes three questions targeted specifically towards Student Services (see attached 2023 Student Services Satisfaction Survey).

## SLIDE 6

Discussion Item 2: Additional insight regarding the “lack of desired jobs” reported as a reason for unemployment. (1 of 2)

**Survey Question:** Check all the reasons below that you are not employed:

* I am still looking.
* I am a student.
* My disability prevents me from working.
* I do not want to give up my SSI/SSDI benefits.
* There are no jobs available to me that are consistent with my DOR employment plan.
* DOR did not assist me in finding a job.
* I have family issues such as daycare or caring for relative.
* Lack of transportation or no transportation.
* I need additional help to find a job.
* **No jobs are available that I want.**
* I am not ready to start working.

## SLIDE 7

Discussion Item 2: Additional insight regarding the “lack of desired jobs” reported as a reason for unemployment. (2 of 2)

* **Background:**
	+ Decreased from 5.8 percent in 2020-21 to 4.0 percent in 2021-22
	+ Of the 825 VR respondents, 445 reported at least one unemployment reason
	+ 36 VR consumers reported there were no jobs available that they want
	+ No additional feedback was provided as to what their desired jobs were
	+ Over 50 percent of consumers choosing this reason were from Orange/San Gabriel, Northern Sierra, San Joaquin Valley, or the Greater East Bay districts.

## SLIDE 8

Discussion Item 3: Data on the average amount of time from when a consumer enters VR to obtaining employment.

* Background:
	+ Using Application Date, Plan Date, and Closure Date for cases with Successful Closures during SFY 2021-22, the average number of days were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Application to Plan** | **Plan to Closure** | **Application to Closure** |
| 58 days | 812 days | 872 days |

## SLIDE 9

Administering 2022/23 Survey

* May 18-19, 2023 - Sent Survey Monkey link and mailed surveys
* May 30, 2023 - Sent follow up email through Survey Monkey
* June 9, 2023 - Number of responses were low
* Decision was made to extend deadline and send follow up through DOR email address
* July 5, 2023 - Sent follow up email through DOR email with deadline of July 19, 2023
* Through this additional effort, response rate greatly improved (approximately additional 290 VR and 40 PE surveys)

## SLIDE 10

2022/23 Survey Sample

* **116,584 individuals were served** by DOR (VR 80,116 and PE 36,468) in SFY 2021/22 (total population)
* **8,378 survey invitations** were sent (VR 5,781 and PE 2,597)
* **730 surveys were undeliverable** (VR 303 and PE 427)
* **959 survey responses** (VR 853 and PE 106) were received (estimated response rate VR 15.6% and PE 4.9%)

## SLIDE 11

Survey Engagement Over Time Has Declined

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2018-19** | **2019-20\*** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** |
| Response Rate | 18.7% | N/A | 16.6% | 13.7% | 12.5% |

\* The CSS was not conducted in SFY 2019-20.

## SLIDE 12

Response Rate Trends by Case Type Over Two Years

* VR and PE were separated in 2021-22
* Total DOR consumers increased from 101,879 in 2020-21 to 116,584 in 2021-22, increasing sample size
* The number of VR responses increased from 825 to 853 from 2021-22 to 2022-23; however, the response rate dropped from 16.5% to 15.6%.
* The number of PE responses dropped from 119 in 2021-22 to 106 in 2022-23, with response rate decreasing from 5.1% to 4.9%.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Case Type** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** |
| VR | 825 (16.5%) | 853 (15.6%) |
| PE | 119 (5.1%) | 106 (4.9%) |

## SLIDE 13

Increasing Survey Participation

* **Background:**
	+ Survey response rates for both VR and PE are low and declining over past several years.
	+ With PE survey response rate at approximately 5 percent, we need better methods of reaching students.
	+ Texting option is vital to reach more students.
	+ Current survey software subscription does not have capability of texting survey link.
	+ Current survey frequency is annual, surveys are sent out in April/May.

## SLIDE 14

DOR’s Planning Unit Contact Information

Peter Frangel, Strategic Initiatives Officer

Peter.frangel@dor.ca.gov

Antoinette Deboisblanc, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

Antoinette.deboisblanc@dor.ca.gov

Judy Gonzalez, Research Data Analyst II

Judy.gonzalez@dor.ca.gov

Marla Harper, Research Data Analyst II

Marla.harper@dor.ca.gov