**State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)**

**State Plan Committee Meeting**
July 29, 2025, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), 721 Capitol Mall, Room 401, Sacramento, CA 95814

**Draft Meeting Minutes**

Note: This committee meeting was held in accordance with California Government Code section 11123.5. There may be members of the public body who participated in the meeting who were granted a reasonable accommodation per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In attendance:

* SRC State Plan Committee members (by Zoom): Ivan Guillen, Michelle Bello, Shannon Coe
* SRC State Plan Committee members absent: Gregory Meza
* DOR staff (in-person): Kate Bjerke
* DOR staff (by Zoom): Peter Frangel
* Members of the public (by Zoom): Michael McCullough

**Item 1: Welcome and Introductions**
Ivan Guillen, SRC Chair and State Plan Committee Chair, welcomed attendees to the meeting. Kate Bjerke, SRC Executive Officer, reviewed the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act requirements. SRC members, DOR staff, and members of the public introduced themselves.

**Item 2: Public Comment**

Michael McCullough commented about the low number of DOR referrals to Employment Networks. Last year DOR had 343 successful closures but only made six referrals to Employment Networks. He suggested that DOR establish a clearer process to support consumers in understanding Social Security communications and avoiding overpayment issues.

**Item 3: Approval of the April 22, 2025 SRC State Plan Committee Meeting Minutes**

It was moved/seconded (Coe/Bello) to approve the April 22nd minutes as presented (Yes – Guillen, Coe, Bello), (No – 0), (Absent – Meza), (Abstain – 0).

**Item 4: State Plan Modification Update**
Peter Frangel, Manager, DOR Policy Performance Section, provided an update on the timeline and progress for the 2024-27 State Plan modification. DOR subject matter experts are currently reviewing and editing their respective sections of the plan. Upcoming milestones will include the following:

* August 1st: DOR will meet with the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) to kick off coordination with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners and learn about expectations for the plan submission timeline.
* August 7th: DOR will submit the RSA 911 case management report for the program year, which provides performance data that will inform updated goals in the State Plan.
* August 13th: DOR will participate in a national State Plan Community of Practice, hosted by San Diego State University, to exchange insights and strategies with other VR agencies.
* September 10th – 11th: At the SRC quarterly meeting, DOR will present updated performance metrics tied to measurable skill gains and other goals, based on finalized program year data.
* October 1st: DOR will submit its annual performance report to RSA, which includes detailed demographic and performance data.
* Mid-October: Draft goals for the State Plan modification will be finalized for internal review.
* November – December: The draft modification will be available for SRC review and submitted to CWDB, with public review planned for January 2026.

Frangel noted that DOR is not currently implementing an Order of Selection, though the issue remains under internal review. Guillen asked how feedback is incorporated into sections of the State Plan if no DOR subject matter expert or liaison is assigned. Frangel explained that while most sections have designated liaisons, his team fills in any gaps by coordinating input.

**Item 4: SRC Involvement with the State Plan Modification**
Bjerke presented a summary of themes and feedback submitted by SRC members and stakeholders on the following questions to inform the State Plan Modification:

1. What are the biggest barriers individuals with disabilities currently face in obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment? What solutions could help reduce or eliminate these barriers?
2. Are there specific disability groups or underserved populations that need greater access to VR services?
3. What specific areas of VR service delivery need improvement (examples: timeliness, accessibility, effectiveness, consumer choice, etc.)? What improvements could be made?
4. How can DOR’s strengthen partnerships with employers?
5. How can DOR encourage more employers to offer internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training opportunities?
6. Are there policies that limit the effectiveness of VR services? If so, what are they?
7. What innovative strategies, programs, or technologies should be adopted to improve VR services?

Guillen provided the following additional input:

* Question 1 - Additional disability groups and underserved populations that need greater access to VR services include Native American consumers, LGBTQ+ consumers, individuals with traumatic brain injuries, and individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing.
* Question 4 - Prioritize filling DOR’s Business Specialist and Regional Business Specialist vacancies.
* Question 5 - Develop a pool of DOR clients who have skills and training that align with regional hiring needs.
* Question 5 - Incentivize providers and partners to serve rural areas and culturally diverse populations.

Coe provided the following additional input:

* Question 5 - Provide employers with information and support on how to effectively implement reasonable accommodations.

**Item 6: Recommendation Development**
The Committee members discussed how to move forward with the feedback collected from stakeholders and community partners. Frangel explained that the State Plan includes both high-level goals and detailed strategies. Several of the suggestions and ideas gathered from stakeholders may be better suited as strategies aligned to existing goals rather than new goals. Frangel encouraged the SRC to remain flexible in their framing and suggested that DOR staff can help determine where ideas and suggestions best fit within the structure of the plan.

Guillen then presented several recommendations developed through CAP’s work with consumers:

* Reduce the volume of documentation required to provide DOR consumers with computers and internet access, both of which are needed to prepare a resume and search for jobs.
* Prioritize and encourage advanced training, work experience and educational degree attainment for DOR consumers. Provide DOR staff with training on this topic. Update policies to reflect that DOR consumers should be encouraged to maximize their employment potential through work experience, advanced training and educational degree attainment.
* Train DOR Counselors on how to provide supported employment services to a broader range of populations, including individuals with behavioral health disabilities, individuals with traumatic brain injuries, individuals with significant disabilities, and youth with disabilities who may need extended services.
* Clarify in DOR’s policies that supported employment services can be provided up to 24 months and are not capped at 90 days after successful case closure.
* Develop more vendors and Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) to improve service delivery by streamlining the process for approving CRPs and Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation. Consider allowing exceptions to contract with Individual Service Providers (ISPs).
* In addition to prioritizing the recruitment of DOR Counselors, also prioritize the recruitment of vacant DOR case support staff like Business Specialists, Medical Consultants, Consulting Psychologists, and Work Incentive Planners.
* Expand the pool of vendors that can provide customized employment services.
* Provide regular updates on the phase out of subminimum wage.

As a next step, Bjerke will compile all of the stakeholder feedback, including Guillen’s additions, into a document and will circulate it to the full SRC and ask members for their priorities. The SRC State Plan Committee members agreed to hold their next meeting on August 12, 2025, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. to draft recommendations. Guillen requested a template or framework to help members formulate structured policy recommendations. Frangel offered to research and provide relevant DOR policies behind feedback themes (e.g., documentation required for computer purchases). There is a need to distinguish between changes that require policy reform, andissues that stem from inconsistent training or implementation.

**Item 7: Adjourn**
It was moved/seconded (Coe/Bello) to adjourn the July 29, 2025 SRC State Plan Committee meeting.