

Core Rehabilitation Services Bidders Q/A

Please use this document in conjunction with the Q/A document from the pre-bidder's information sessions for clarifying information. Many questions asked will be covered during vendor/staff training to begin summer 2013

Additional Guidance for Bid Proposals

Although the following documents are not Mandatory Requirements of the bid proposal, providing such documents will speed up the contract approval process:

NYS Attorney General's Office Charities Registration Filing. Any payee/vendor who wishes to do business with New York State must be exempt or current in their Charities Registration Filing with the New York State Attorney General's Office. All charitable organizations operating in New York State are required by law to register and file annual financial reports with the Attorney General's Office. This includes any organization that conducts charitable activities, holds property that is used for charitable purposes, or solicits financial or other contributions. Please visit the NYS Attorney General's website for further information and required forms at <http://www.charitiesnys.com>.

Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire. Please print and return one original and one copy of the attached questionnaire or complete the questionnaire online via OSC's online VendRep System. To enroll in and use the New York State VendRep System, see the VendRep System instructions at: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/systeminit.htm> or go directly to the VendRep System online at <https://portal.osc.state.ny.us>. For direct VendRep System user assistance, the OSC Help Desk may be reached at 866-370-4672 or 518-408-4672 or by email at ciohelpdesk@osc.state.ny.us.

Workers' Compensation Insurance and Disability Benefits Insurance. New York State law requires that all businesses contracting with the State carry and maintain both Workers' Compensation Insurance and Disability Benefits Insurance for its employees.

a. Workers' Compensation. Return one of the following Forms. For each new contract or contract renewal, the State must obtain ONE of the following forms from the contractor to prove the contractor has appropriate workers' compensation insurance coverage:

- **Form C-105.2** – Certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance issued by private insurance carriers, or **Form U-26.3** issued by the State Insurance Fund; or
- **Form SI-12**– Certificate of Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance; or **Form GSI-105.2** Certificate of Participation in Workers' Compensation Group Self-Insurance; or
- **CE-200**– Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from NYS Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage.

b. Disability Benefits. Return one of the following forms. For each new contract or contract renewal, the State must obtain ONE of the following forms from the contractor to prove the contractor has appropriate disability benefits insurance coverage:

- **Form DB-120.1** - Certificate of Disability Benefits Insurance; or
- **Form DB-155**- Certificate of Disability Benefits Self-Insurance; or
- **CE-200**– Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from New York State Workers’ Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage.

For additional information regarding workers’ compensation and disability benefits requirements, please refer to the New York State Workers’ Compensation Board website at: <http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/Employers/busPermits.jsp>

The requesting entity is the NYSED, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234.

| Question | Response |
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| General Contract Questions | |
| 1. Will agencies on contract prior to October 1 rollover into the new contract or will they have to re-apply | There are no contract roll-overs. All agencies wishing to provide Unified, SE Intensive or SE Extended services must apply. |
| 2. Are all of 2013 UCS dollars (full year) available for usage through September 2013? We have referrals to bill against the unused dollars and we want to be certain that we are not limited to three quarters of the annual dollar amount. | Services authorized by ACCES-VR District Offices which are delivered prior to 9/30/13 up to the 5-year contract amount will be reimbursed under existing UCS. |
| 3. How should the application, attachments and subdocuments be submitted – electronically, hard copy, or both? Fillable PDF without actual signatures or scan and email with real signatures? | <p>The application (Attachment 1), individual services forms (Attachments 1-A – 1-H). Attachment 1-I and all submission documents should be submitted electronically using the forms posted on ACCES’s website.</p> <p>Electronic signatures should be included on all documentation where required.</p> <p><u>Examples are:</u> Forms and signatures can be scanned into PDF and submitted electronically. A snapshot can be taken on a smart phone</p> <p>If you are unable to scan the signature pages into PDF, submit the proposal electronically to the CRS@mail.nysed.gov mailbox. NYSED will not disqualify any bid proposals that are received without electronic signatures. Please do not send paper proposals due to the inability to scan</p> |

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| | signatures. Electronic bid proposals are strongly encouraged. |
| 4. How should printed and signed contracts be returned to SED? Snail mail or scanned and emailed? | Please read all instructions carefully which accompany the contract regarding signatures. They must be original and returned via snail or express mail. |
| 5. Where do we indicate the counties we wish to serve? | Attachment 1 – CRS - Basic Information |
| 6. If we are not applying for a particular service, do we omit those pages from the RFP when submitted | Yes |
| 7. If a vendor has a current contract and wants to expand its service area – can we do that? | Yes. Please check the appropriate district offices you are applying to provide services and list all physical locations and counties you wish to serve on Attachment 1- Basic Information |
| 8. Under “list all physical locations, etc.” – if a vendor intends to use community locations, what telephone number and contact person should be entered. | List the location the service will be provided and the contact information for the individual/agency that will be providing the service. |
| 9. Many agencies indicated the specific services they provide and asked if they were eligible to apply | If your agency believes the service(s) you provide fits into one of the CRS categories, you are encouraged to apply. The service(s) an agency currently provides should be clearly outlined and how they are applicable to CRS. |
| 10. Attachments do not appear to have enough space to enter all the information required. | The forms were designed as “fill-in” forms and will expand as information is entered |
| 11. Can I include attachments with each individual service form as supporting documentation? | Yes, but it may not be necessary |
| 12. Do providers need to provide a board resolution with the RFP | No |
| 13. Does an applicant need to submit MWBE Certification? | No |
| 14. If I am a current vendor, should I fill out a NYSED Substitute W-9 for the new contract? | No. Please NYSED Substitute Form W-9 section of the RFP. |
| 15. Can providers propose a variety of services to only one target population? | Yes. You may choose to serve only one population |
| 16. In Attachment 1, N/A can be entered in the applicant is a sole proprietor. There is no box to indicate this. How should it be done? | On page 1 under Applicant Information of Attachment I there is a checkbox for “organization type.” Sole proprietorship is one of the options. |
| 17. How does an agency know if they need to complete a VRQ ? | Any one who does not currently hold a contract with NYSED is required to submit a VRQ OR any current vendor who previously completed the VRQ more than 6 months ago, is required to recertify. |
| Does an agency whose contact level will be less than \$100,000 need to submit a VRQ? | It is unlikely that a vendor will have a contract less than the \$100,000 (5 year) |

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| <p>What is the DUNS#? If it is a new contract, do I have one?</p> | <p>limit. Any potential vendor who meets the criteria above, should complete a VRQ.</p> <p>More information about a DUNS number can be found at http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html</p> <p>Please VRQ section of the RFP for further instruction and exempt agencies or by contacting NYS Vend Rep System at https://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/vendor_index.htm</p> |
| <p>18. Under the NON-COLLUSIVE BIDDING form in the Submission Documents there is no actual place for signatures on the form. Do the Signature(s) pages that follow it refer to the NON-COLLUSIVE BIDDING form?</p> <p>Is this only completed if you are subcontracting your awarded ACCES-VR services?</p> | <p>Yes, the signature pages follow the language of the form. The form is required with the bid submission.</p> |
| <p>19. Lobbying in the submission documents – What is the award #, contract year and contract #?</p> | <p>The form being referred to is CERTIFICATIONS REGARDING LOBBYING; DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS; AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS. You can leave award #, contract year and contract # blank. Use RFP #13-001 for Project Name. The other information to be completed is the name of applicant, name and title of authorized representative, signature of authorized representative, and date.</p> |
| <p>20. Are new vendors applying as sole proprietorships, with no plans to subcontract, required to complete Consultant Disclosure Legislation forms A and B?</p> | <p>Yes. The forms apply, even if the bidder does not subcontract services.</p> |
| <p>21. Are new vendors applying as sole proprietorships required to hold workers compensation & disability insurance other than private health insurance? Are exemption forms required to be submitted if such insurance is not required?</p> | <p>Please refer to the section entitled “Workers’ Compensation and Debarment” in the RFP. Visit the Workers’ Compensation Board’s website at http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/Employers/busPermits.jsp You may also call the Workers’ Compensation Board at (518) 486-6307.</p> |
| <p>22. Will applicants get a “return receipt” email indicating that the application is received?</p> | <p>ACCES-VR will set this up. Please be aware that receipt of an application does not confirm a “pass” recommendation by reviewers</p> |
| <p>23. Will approved vendors be given up front funding to hire staff or to purchase equipment?</p> | <p>No. Up front funding in not allowable.</p> |

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| 24. Why is there only one group that reads proposals? How is it determined which group reads the proposal | See Section 3 – Evaluation Criteria and Method of Award of the RFP. |
| 25. Will any contract be accepted/rejected as a whole, or will ACCES possibly approve some aspects of an applications and not others | Each specific service category will be reviewed independently and can receive a "pass" rating in one service category and may receive a "fail" rating in other. See Criteria for Evaluating Bid section. |
| 26. Can more than one application be submitted by the same agency? | No. Agencies should submit one application for all services they are applying to provide. |
| 27. The application requests current valid licenses/ accreditations. Do you want those that are applicable to employment, or any that the organization possesses? | We are interested in any valid/license/accreditations that are applicable to employment as well as any other that the organization possesses. This information documents agency's compliance record and applicant's commitment towards organizational transparency. |
| 28. A contractor shall maintain complete inventory of all realty/equipment & other non-expendable assets – does this refer to such items that may be purchased/improved/ developed under the agreement related to a subcontracting arrangement for services? Is this required for sole proprietorships with no plans for subcontracting | This is standard contract language and will only apply if appropriate. |
| 29. Will there be modifications to the contract annually as there have been with the current UCS contract? | Yes. Refer to Method of Award section |
| 30. Will there be the usual reconciliation period for the UCS and SE contracts that are ending? | Yes |
| 31. Can you provide any more detail on how the SE vs. UCS services will appear under CRS? Will there still be distinctions between the SE type services in which a person must meet certain eligibility criteria vs. UCS in which the eligibility criteria are less stringent? | Supported Employment is a Core Rehabilitation Service and so will now be included in CRS with other core services currently purchased under the UCS contract. Please refer to Job Placement Services section for a description of the nine service categories including Job Placement and Supported Employment Services. There are no changes to policy and procedure ACCES-VR uses to determine VR service needs with a consumer. The requirements for SE are set by federal regulation and have not changed. Please refer to the CRS Guide and ACCES-VR Policy and Procedure for any additional information. |
| 32. Can vendors apply for additional program approvals after they have been awarded a contract? | All services a vendor is applying to provide must be included in their response to RFP #13-001. Applications for additional services will only be accepted if the RFP is re-issued. |
| 33. Can a vendor defer the start date of an approved program? | No. |

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| 34. Can an agency deny a referral request form ACCES-VR? | Yes |
| 35. Is the \$75,000 minimum per contract year or for the 5 year contract? Please clarify minimum and maximum bid amounts. For agencies without capacity for a \$75,000 contract, will there be exceptions? | Please refer to Background section of the RFP. ACCES-VR will not contract for services where the annual contracted services are valued at less than \$50,000 per year to not-for-profit and for-profit agencies and \$25,000 per year to sole proprietors (individuals). Note that minimum supported employment awards will be for \$15,000 per year and maximum awards for all new vendors will be limited to \$100,000 per year for supported employment intensive and \$100,000 per year for Unified Services. Applicants should bid on the number of units that can effectively provide to ACCES-VR consumers. Contract level exceptions will be granted for those vendors who apply to provide Technical Evaluation and Training Services (CSC 165X and 167X) |
| 36. Does the \$75,000 contract commitment apply to a cumulative amount for all services per organization or per service | Per organization |
| 37. If the contract amount is based on expenditures through 2012, how does it allow for new services that were started in 2013 (i.e., job coaching for PROJECT Search)? | See Method of Award Section |
| 38. Will there be any guidelines in terms of capacity for a given services – any minimum or maximum number of individuals served | A vendor should apply for the number units they can effectively provide to ACCES-VR consumers. |
| 39. If there are contract funds remaining at the end of the contract, what happens to those funds? | Vendors will be paid for actual services delivered. The 5-year contract total represents the maximum available. |
| 40. If a provider goes over allocations in year 1 or 2, are they allowed to draw down funds from other years or have then adjusted? | ACCES will adjust the annual budget from year to year within the limits of the 5-year contract maximum. |
| 41. Will private for-profit companies be considered offering focused services over larger agencies offering broad based services? | Each application will be reviewed based on its own merit. |
| 42. How do we differentiate between the types of disability we serve if we are applying for both Unified and SE? We can serve MI under Unified but not SE as we do not have an | For unified services indicate the population(s) that can be served on Attachment 1 – Basic Information and for supported employment service, indicate the population(s) to be served on Attachment 1-E. |

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| 43. For SEP must we state the number of new individuals we plan to serve and rehabilitate or is this worked out in the contract? If so, what is the recommendation for calculating this? | Applicants must state their maximum capacity for each service they are able to provide. |
| 44. Recent college graduates have made good job coaches. Will there be any exception to the Job Coach qualification requiring two years of experience? | Staffing Requirements have been updated for job coaches. College degree & two year of experience or supervised by a masters level counselor. SE vendors are expected to make use of the ACCES-VR funded Supported Employment Training for their job developers and coaches. |
| 45. Sub-contracting- Previous contracts have prohibited subcontracting for SE but UCS allowed up to 25%. Will this change with CRS? | Subcontracting - will be limited to thirty percent (30%) of the annual contract budget. Subcontracting is defined as non-employee direct personal services and related incidental expenses, including travel. |
| 46. Is the "bonus" payment rate determined by which region the consumer resides in or where the vendor's headquarters are? | The bonus is determined by which region the vendor's home office is head quartered. For those vendors outside of NYS, the rate for the closest region will be used. |
| 47. Provide clarification on drop out payments/rates for non-compliant consumers. | No-shows are different than Drop-outs; refer to Description of Services. |
| 48. If a vendor bills for a no show, is the case closed with ACCES-VR? If yes, are there exceptions. | Upon billing for a no-show, the remaining amount of the authorization becomes null and void, but does not necessarily mean the case will be closed. |
| 49. After the initial contract allocations are made will there be flexibility to move funds within the contract between what has been UCS and SE? | There may be some flexibility. Any changes to a Contract Appendix B can only be requested by the ACCES-VR District Office Manager. |
| 50. How will current contractors who have exceeded their contracts be treated when new contract allocations are made? | Refer to Method of Award section. |
| 51. Will providers who may be under utilized in the final year of the current contract be penalized during the allocation process for the new contract? | Refer to Method of Award section. |
| 52. Is the group rate per person or per group? | Per group for supported employment and per group for orientation |
| 53. When ACCES-VR allocates 'units', is this a dollar amount and will it be based on historical data with the vendor? | Refer to Method of Award section. |
| 54. Define a new vendor. | A new vendor is defined for supported employment as: a vendor that ACCES has not previously awarded units to provide supported employment to its consumers. |

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| | A new vendor is defined for unified services as: a vendor from whom ACCES has not previously purchased unified services (formerly UCS). |
| 55. Will there be a way to 'grow' current or new providers? | Yes. Refer to Method of Award section. |
| 56. Is a vendor limited to Total Unit Capacity? What if we ask for 4 or 5 and get 6? | Vendors will not receive more than their stated capacity. |
| 57. I would like to know if ACCES-VR has considered establishing a position to contract with individuals to work in the field to set up OJT's for consumers rather than send consumers to training programs with hopes they will make contacts for employment after training. | ACCES-VR's Integrated Employment Specialists (IES) I staff assigned to each district office and IES 2 staff assigned to each of our 5 regions provide this service. In addition to working with the business community and developing OJTs, job shadow and internship opportunities, IESs are responsible for workforce development and business relations for the district office and region. In addition, ACCES-VR has developed a new service under CRS, Work Experience Development , 559X designed to enlist the assistance of a community provider to aid in securing an employer-based (unpaid) work experience opportunity for our consumers. OJT development is not limited to IESs. Refer to Job Placement Services section. |
| 58. Can a corporation with one staff person propose to provide new services under CRS; i.e., Work Readiness, Soft Skills? Will initially consider sub-contracting in order to staff the service until after consumers are referred and ACCES-VR approves. | Yes. Subcontracting- will be limited to thirty percent (30%) of the annual contract budget. Subcontracting is defined as non-employee direct personal services and related incidental expenses, including travel. |
| 59. Noted that three of the attachments (1-B, 1-D and 1-H) are dated 2008 whereas the others are correct at 2013. Do I need corrected forms? | No. We are aware of the typo. Attachments 1-B, 1-D and –H can be used as is. These errors have been corrected and re-posted on ACCES's website. |
| 60. Noted that Attachment 1-C goes from item number 6 to number 9. Has something been left out or is this a numbering error? | This is a numbering error. There are no missing questions. Attachment 1-C can be used as is. It has also been corrected and re-reposted on ACCES's website. |
| 61. Are employee names required on proposal or are job titled what is needed? | We do not request employee names on the Application or Attachments. Years of experience and education level are required. |
| 62. Attachment 1, Staff Qualifications, Q. 3 – what is considered supporting documentation for "employee reference checks?" | Agency policy should be followed when checking potential employee's references. This information should be available for ACCES-VR review. |
| 63. Attachment 1, Consumer Information, Q. 1 – What specific consumer identification data is required by ACCES-VR? | Agency policy should be followed regarding information that uniquely identifies the consumer and should be available for ACCES-VR review |

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| <p>64. What is an SFS State ID #?</p> <p>How does an agency go about getting an SFS#?</p> <p>We have a Vendor ID# that appears on the vouchers we receive from ACCES-VR. Does this mean that we are considered registered with the SFS Centralized vendor file? Therefore, we do not need to complete the NYSED Substitute Form W-9?</p> | <p>An SFS State ID number is a NYS Vendor ID and different from an ACCES vendor identification #.</p> <p>It is a 10 digit number used in the Statewide Financial System (SFS) instead of the vendor's Federal tax ID number. A NYS Vendor ID is required before NYS can pay the vendor.</p> <p>Vendors should check directly with SFS to verify their vendor status and take the necessary actions accordingly.</p> <p>For information regarding contact: http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendors/vendorguide/guide.htm</p> <p>Or, the SFS Help Desk can be reached Mon-Fri, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. (518) 457-7737 (7-7SFS) or at helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov</p> |
| <p>65. Direct Placement Intake (921X) and Supported Employment Intake (571X) – There has always been a <u>No Show Rate</u> for Direct Placement. Will this continue and will there be one for Supported Employment?</p> | <p>Unless otherwise noted under the service category, the drop out payment applies.</p> |
| <p>66. If an agency is interested in providing both <u>Youth and Adult services</u>, how should the two be differentiated on the Capacity Summary and the specific Programmatic RFP Attachments?</p> | <p>Do not differentiate youth and adult services on the Attachment 1-I Capacity Summary sheet. Provide the combined total for each case service code applied for.</p> |
| <p>67. Is there a maximum number of pages that can be utilized within each, <u>Attachment Individual Service Form</u>?</p> | <p>There are no page limitations unless indicated. Please be concise but thorough.</p> |
| <p>68. The RFP states: All emailed documents must be received by the CRS@mail.nysed.gov mailbox no later than 5:00 PM on May 6, 2013. Paper documents are only acceptable if the bidder cannot submit electronic copies of the proposal. But the instruction sheet states that electronic and 3 paper copies must be submitted.</p> | <p>There is an error in the Attachment 1 Instructions. The instructions should be: All emailed documents must be received by the CRS@mail.nysed.gov mailbox no later than 5:00 PM on May 6, 2013. Paper documents are only acceptable if the bidder cannot submit electronic copies of the proposal. This error has been fixed and re-posted on ACCES's website.</p> |
| <p>69. Are school districts eligible to apply to provide Core Rehabilitation Services?</p> | <p>Yes. If a school district is interested in serving an adult population, their application can be considered.</p> <p>Note: CRS is not a substitute for transition services the school is mandated to</p> |

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| | provide under IDEA. |
| 70. Do you want an annual total unit capacity or a five-year capacity in the capacity summary? | Yes. For Attachment 1-I, Capacity Summary, last column "Total Unit Capacity for your Agency"; please provide an annual total. When indicating units, do not include any wording, use whole numbers only - no decimals or fractions. |
| 71. Has ACCES conducted a Needs Assessment that defines regional need? If so, is that available to bidders? | Bidders should apply to provide the services and number of units/FTEs they are able to provide |
| 72. Reiterate the qualifications for someone overseeing the operation of ACCES-VR reimbursed vocational services. It states that the supervision must be provided by someone with a Master's degree in Rehab Counseling or a Bachelor's degree and at least 4 years of experience. Other areas of the RFP for individual services state the supervision should be by an individual holding at least a Bachelor's degree and one year of experience or 4 years of experience. Is there any other combination of experience and degree allowed as we have someone with 18 years of experience but an Associate's degree in Human Services? | With the exception of those applicants providing freestanding (non-agency related) placement services, an applicant who oversees the operation of ACCES-VR reimbursed vocational services, must hold at least a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, or a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services or a related field and at least four years relevant experience delivering vocational services to individuals with disabling conditions. |
| 73. How should staff FTE's be reflected for an individual who is self-employed? How should FTE's be allocated when staff is spread across multiple programs? | $(\# \text{ of Weeks Employed} / \# \text{ of Weeks Program Operated}) \times (\# \text{ of Hours Employed Per Week} / \text{Standard Work Week})$ 1. A full time individual employed for the total program duration is equal to 1.000. 2. An individual employed for less than the total program duration must be prorated based on the following ratio: the number of weeks employed/number of weeks program in session. 3. A part-time employee (less than 32.5 or 35 hours per week) must be prorated based on the following ratio: the number of hours employed per week/full time standard work week hours for that position title. Examples of FTE calculation: Employee A: Hours employed per week - 35 Standard work week hours - 35 |

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| | <p># of weeks employed in program - 46 # of weeks program operated - 46 FTE - 35/35 x 46/46 = 1.000</p> |
| 74. There are times that an individual may not be working through ACCES-VR but still wishes to work with a specific provider. If a vendor provides comparable services to individuals on a fee for service basis (where reimbursement happens privately, either directly from an individual or through a third party such as insurance company or a school district), is the vendor allowed to charge less than the contracted price as approved by ACCES-VR? | The RFP would not impact the provider's rate schedule for non-contract services provided to third parties. |
| 75. If an ACCES-VR case file is marked "confidential" is that acceptable? If ACCES-VR is developing forms, can they mark "confidential" on the form(s)? | No. ACCES takes consumer confidentiality very seriously. All vendors must ensure confidentiality. |
| 76. Please expand on "ensuring that devices that store SED information/data need to be "encrypted" and review acceptable procedures" so providers can understand the expectations. Would this include email or will all reporting be done electronically through your system? What are the technology requirements? | <p>SED information must be maintained in a secure, accurate, and reliable manner, and be readily available for authorized use. SED information should be protected from accidental or malicious disclosure, modification, or destruction. Devices that store SED data should be encrypted so that if the device is lost the data is inaccessible.</p> <p>Individuals who use SED's information should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain information and system confidentiality, including security controls and passwords • Protect information from unauthorized use or disclosure as required by state and federal laws and agency regulations • Safeguard accounts and passwords. <p>When the CRS contracts are awarded the specific details on how to submit reports will be provided.</p> |
| 77. After each section, we are asked to explain or give examples. What are you looking for? How detailed do you want applicants to be. | Explanations/examples should provide supporting information regarding how the agency provides the service. Be as specific or detailed as necessary |
| 78. Please define integration | Please refer to the Supported Employment Policy |

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| | http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/supportedemployment/seguidelines.htm |
| 79. Are UCS performance based services now under the job placement? If no, do they exist some where else? | Direct Placement services in the former UCS are not in the Job Placement Services section of CRS. |
| 80. Can a consumer go from WR 1, 2 or 3 to Direct Placement without completing all 3 levels of WR? | This may be a possible scenario. Service is based on consumer's needs as stated in the Individualized for Employment Plan |
| 81. My agency has been providing placement services under UCS for the past 10 years but we no longer have a physical NY address. We do have 2 subcontractors who work out of their homes. Since we do not officially have a NY physical address, how would this impact the criteria requirements, if any? | Subcontracting will be limited to thirty percent (30%) of the annual contract budget. |
| 82. Explain the difference between 630X and 559X. Both seem to be internships. Is 559X specific to Youth? | 630X is vocational skill training and 559X is to develop an internship, work try-out or worked-based learning experience. No services are specific to youth. |
| 83. Please clarify Status 26 – successfully employment or rehabbed? | Status 26 Closed Rehabilitation – The consumer and the VRC must consider the placement to be satisfactory and agree that the individual is performing well on the job. There must be a reasonable expectation that the placement will be sustained; and, the provision of services in the individual's Individualized Plan for Employment must have contributed to the achievement of the employment outcome. |
| 84. What is Service Status 14, 18, 20, 22? | Status 14 – Counseling and Guidance Status 18 – Training Status 20 – Ready for Employment Status 22 – In Employment |
| 85. Which code is the Fast Track | Fast Track no longer exists |
| 86. Do all hours for evaluations, assessments, work readiness and unpaid work experience require the presence of staff or can natural supports be used? | No. All hours must be in the presence of staff |
| Entry Services | |
| 1. Will Entry 1 and 2 take the place of VR counselors enrolling high school students? Can a vendor apply for entry services just for YES and not entry for adults? Meaning, if we apply for Entry services will we get referrals for people we may not be expected to serve otherwise? | No. Vendors may choose to work with specialized and/or specific populations. VR Counselors may work with transition-age youth. |

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| 2. How many individuals constitute a "group" for Entry I services? | CRS Entry I Group Orientation service is offered at the discretion and with the approval of the local DO who will determine appropriate group size. |
| 3. Will all required forms and application materials be provided by ACCES to the vendors performing Entry I services, or will the vendor be expected to print/reproduce these documents? | Vendor is expected to print/reproduce |
| Assessment Services | |
| 1. Should assessment tools and/or work samples be submitted with the Attachment? | No |
| 2. In terms of the education requirements for the Assessment services, would a Master's degree in Education with a concentration in Adult Education and Training be considered acceptable education to provide this service? | No. Staff qualifications for Assessment Services are outlined in Commissioner's Regulations and NYSED must adhere to them. |
| 3. For services which include Evaluator levels requiring a Master's level, the phrase 'related area' is used. What specific disciplines / degree programs are considered 'related'? For example, would a MS in Sociology be acceptable? Similarly, for supervisory credentials at the Bachelor's level, what type of experience with disabilities is considered 'appropriate experience'? | No. An MS in Sociology would not be considered a related area. Related areas include: Behavioral Health, Behavioral Science, Disability Studies, Human Relations, Human Services, Marriage and Family Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Psychometrics, Rehabilitation, Social Work, Special Education and Vocational Assessment/Evaluation. |
| 4. Why did the 112X Community Based Assessment rate go from \$238 per day to \$61 per day? | The rate for 112X went from a daily rate for up to 10 days to an hourly rate not to exceed 40 hours |
| 5. The application materials indicate you may not apply to provide services that are done for free to the general public unless there is a difference in the quality of service. Please explain | ACCES-VR will not purchase services that are typically provided to the public for free; e.g., placement through a temp agency, training through a One-Stop, etc. |
| 6. CBWA – does the provider need separate release forms for each "significant other" for interview processes? | Yes. Confidentiality is extremely important to ACCES-VR. A release form must be obtained for all individuals interviewed. |
| 7. Our agency has a separate contract to provide standardized testing through our clinical services. What are the benefits of applying for these through CRS instead of having a separate contract for clinical services? | These are different services. This service should not be used as an alternative to psychological evaluations. |
| 8. What category of assessment services would fund the delivery of clinical assessment services (such as: medicals, | These services are not covered under CRS. |

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| 9. Are consumers required to progress through each level of assessment or do we determine which level? | VR Counselors determine the appropriate services for consumers |
| 10. Under 112X, is there any state provision that would allow an individual to work on the employer's premises without actually being employed by them on their "books" (workmen's comp insurance)? | Please refer to the section entitled "Workers' Compensation and Debarment" in the RFP. Visit the Workers' Compensation Board's website at http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/Employers/busPermits.jsp You may also call the Workers' Compensation Board at (518) 486-6307 |
| Work Readiness Services | |
| 1. Work Readiness 1 – Soft Skills – Please clarify the rate and standard authorization. | A unit of service is a minimum of 2.5 hours per day up to 5 days. A standard authorization of 10 units can be authorized as it is possible to attend two (2) a 2.5 hour sessions in one day (morning and afternoon) |
| 2. A unit service is listed as a 5-hour day at a rate of \$44 for Region 3. That means that WR 2 would be funded at a level significantly lower than WR 1. Is this an error? | There is no error. ACCES-VR has restructured 620X to encourage its use. |
| 3. For WR 2 and 3, what does it mean when the RFP states a skills development plan for each vocational area? | In addition to the soft skills training provided under WR 1, WR 2 and 3 are defined as a set of activities that lead to the development of skills for a specific career outcome (i.e., skill development in retail sales, utility worker, or other generic job areas) consistent with consumer IPE goals and locally available employment opportunities. A skill development plan must address this. |
| 4. WR 3 – The expected outcome is that consumers will have had a real work experience. Define a real work experience. | Real Work Experience – at least an entry level, competitive, paid employment consistent with the individual's vocational goal. |
| 5. Why are there no deaf service rates for work readiness? | They were discontinued due to underutilization. |
| 6. WR 2 and 3 instructions that an outline should be included. Attachment 1-C says they should be available for review. How should we proceed? | Outlines should be available for review. |
| Youth Employment Services | |
| 1. Under YES, do all services need to be applied for? | No. A bidder should apply for the specific services they wish to provide |
| 2. What is the age range for transitional aged youth | Prior to the age of 25 |
| 3. Can a vendor specify that the services they propose are for youth only? | Yes. The vendor should demonstrate competence and experience in the service of youth with disabilities |
| 4. Are YES services available to students who are interested in working after school and/or on weekends? Would coaching and other supports be available to them? | Yes |

| Job Placement Services | |
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| 1. CSC 959X is an hourly rate. Does one hour equal one unit? | Yes |
| 2. Quality Wage Incentive (933X) and Quality Outcome Wage (577X) – There is a requirement within the <u>Quality Wage Incentive (933X)</u> that pay stubs or an employer certification of wages must be submitted. There does not appear to be that requirement for <u>Quality Outcome Wage (577X)</u> . | There is a requirement for documentation of all quality bonus incentive. The final report for Milestones contains a section that will allow an employer do document the level of satisfaction with the consumer and current wages/hours for the purposes of the quality bonus. |
| 3. Does the 958X rate of \$10 per hour include administrative costs? Where there is reimbursement to the provider to pay minimum wage in an internship, etc. Will appropriate adjustments be made if minimum wage increases? | Yes. ACCES will re-evaluate this rate in year 3 of this contract pending minimum wage rate at that time. |
| 4. For direct placement rates, I note there are the regular rates and the deaf rates. What additional services are required of the vendor to offer these deaf services and to obtain the deaf rates? | Additional services are to include interpreter services. Providers should have experience and expertise in providing placement services for deaf and hard of hearing impaired individuals. |
| 5. Does a private company vendor who provides direct placement only, need approval from NYS regarding hiring a new employee (not a subcontractor)? If yes, how does the employer report this to NYS; no form or procedure provided. | Staffing rosters and credentials may be reviewed during program monitoring or audit. |
| 6. Are we correct that the 9 month expectation has been removed from Direct Placement? | Yes |
| 7. Is CWE considered training? If we are considered the individual's employer for the period of time that he/she is participating in the CWE, will we be responsible for possible unemployment payments once CWE ends? If the person works longer than 4 weeks (i.e., 8 weeks at 20 hours per week), will they be eligible for NYS Disability (non-work related medical leave)? Will a vendor be paid a fee for developing the work experience site (559X) for a person participating in a Community Work Experience or a Work Readiness 3 service? | Community Work Experience – A service designed to provide paid work experiences; e.g., a paid internship. The individual is paid minimum wage and not the prevailing wage if different. It is limited to 160 hours. This is a wage reimbursement mechanism when an employer is unable or unwilling to put the ACCES-VR consumer or transition-age youth on their payroll. The vendor is responsible for <u>withholding</u> federal, state, local tax (in some locations) and Federal Insurance Contributions (FICA) which includes Social Security and Medicare taxes. Administrative costs should include <u>employer payroll tax</u> which may include but is not limited to the employer's share of Social Security and Medicare tax, State Unemployment Insurance (SUI), and State Disability Insurance (SDI). |

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| 8. Please clarify who will be paying the consumer and the process for doing so under Community Work Experience (958X)? | The vendor will be paying the consumer at a rate not to exceed \$10.00 per hour. |
| 9. If an agency was a wholly owned subsidiary to act as the "payroll" for 958X is that acceptable? It is not a temp company but acts as an extension of the agency | Please confer with your legal counsel |
| 10. Is job placement included in the Work Experience Development? | Work Experience Development is different from the direct placement milestone model. |
| 11. Please provide a definition of Community Based provider as it relates to Attachment 1-D, question 2 | Attachment 1-D, question 2 refers to employers and businesses in the community |
| 12. What case service codes are included in Job Placement, Level 2 | Please ignore any reference to levels for Job Placement Services. ACCES-VR has moved to a tier system. |
| 13. Is there a recommended timeframe to complete community-based work experience? | Not to exceed 160 hours |
| 14. Clarify who receives pay rate for Quality Wage Incentive for provider? | The CRS contract holder |
| 15. Is the provider eligible for the Quality Incentive if a person is hired for the wage and still holds that wage at the point of retention? Or does the person need to work up to that wage at point of retention to receive the incentive? | To achieve the quality wage incentive, the individual must have maintained the wage level for the last 3 weeks prior to closure as rehabilitated and it must be documented by the employer |
| 16. Please clarify for 932X what is meant by "this rate cannot be combined with any other placement or training rate?" | When paying for 932X in combination with WR 3 (630X), no other tiers of direct placement or Supported Employment will be funded |
| 17. Will an agency be penalized in its evaluation if an individual does not want to work 35 hours per week? | No. Quality bonuses are an incentive. |
| 18. Job coaching 959X now includes resume writing, interviewing skills, etc. Please clarify | See definition of Coaching Supports under the Job Placement section of the RFP. Any of the items listed are included under Coaching Supports |
| 19. What is the maximum amount of job coaching (959X) that can be received in a UCS contract? | Contract allocations are determined based on the criteria established in Evaluation Criteria and Method of Award. |
| 20. Clarify the difference between 959X and 790X for job coaching | Coaching Supports (for employment) 959X is defined under Job Placement Services and Coaching Supports (postsecondary education, internship, or other activities in pursuit of employment goals) is defined under Adjunct Services |
| Supported Employment Services | |
| 1. Please explain the rationale for excluding individuals working on NYSID or NISH contracts from being eligible to | ACCES has \$9 M to spend on ACCES-VR Extended Supported Employment and need to spend this funding judiciously. Therefore, we place the emphasis on |

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| | individual placement sites as opposed to those with alternate funding streams. |
| 2. On page 16 of the Q&A it states that “no extended service funding will be provided for individuals retained in employment comprised of NISH or NYSID contracts”. What does this mean for clients who are currently funded in extended and placed in a NISH or NYSID job? Will their funding end, grandfathered, or dropped? | ACCES-VR has no intention of withdrawing funding. |
| 3. Why is there no opportunity for Quality Bonus for competitive employment in NYSID/NISH contracts? | See #1 |
| 4. Does the lack of extended service funding, when someone achieves competitive employment in a NYSID/NISH contract only for ACCES-VR extended or does it apply to OPWDD and OMH/PROS (ORS) extended funding? | ACCES-VR is unable to speak for OPWDD or OMH |
| 5. NYSID/NISH contracts offer great pay and job benefits. Is it VR’s intent to negate these jobs as employment for people with disabilities? | See #1 |
| 6. Is ACCES-VR extended funding restricted for anyone working on NYSID contracts or just those who are working on “group sites”? | See #1 |
| 7. Individuals placed on NYSID/NISH janitorial sties work in similar environments for the field. The work specified work locations, generally alone, even if the facility is a large employment site. With job sites in that parameter, why would a provider not be able to use ACCES-VR extended funding to support these individuals. | See #1 |
| 8. Many deaf consumers are placed on NYSID/NISH jobs at excellent wages and need supports provided by the rehab staff with ASL skills to maintain their employment. Would these individuals be able to be supported through ACCES-VR extended funding. If not, why? | See #1 |
| 9. Contracts through NYSID are awarded within “competitive standards of services” and do not have funds for supports that many individuals needs to sustain their employment. Why would these people not be eligible for ACCES-VR | See #1 |

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| <p>10. Please define a "group site" or define enclave and mobile work crew.</p> | <p>Enclave – consists of a small group (generally 5-8 individuals) which is integrated among the regular workforce of a community business or industry and is under the supervision of an agency employee. There is typically a contractual relationship between the business and the agency, and the agency pays the workers with disabilities either by a piece rate, a straight sub-minimum wage, or by pay commensurate with production. Enclaves are distinguished by the provision of continuous, individualized job and integrative special skills training for its participants.</p> <p>Mobile Crew – agency sponsored small work crews (generally no more than 8 individuals) who travel together to various work sites in the community. Janitorial and maintenance tasks are the most common activities performed by work crews. The crew may operate from a vehicle with one supervisor. Methods of payment are similar to those used in the enclave approach; paid through the agency. Mobile crew members should be provided the same opportunities for integration with customers and the general public, to the same extent as non-disabled workers in comparable positions interacting with others in performing these work activities.</p> |
| <p>11. Under Attached 1-E, would PROS ORS services be an equivalent for OMH extended services agreement? If so, what would be submitted to qualify as a confirmation of the funding agreement that is required to be included in the RFP?</p> | <p>The provider should submit an attestation that they have a referral agreement with the local PROS provider to provide extended services under the PROS Ongoing Rehabilitation Supports (ORS) category for those individuals with MH diagnosis who complete intensive services that their agency.</p> |
| <p>12. Please define significant disability</p> | <p>Please refer to the 2012 Guidelines for Supported Employment http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/supportedemployment/seguidelines.htm</p> |
| <p>13. Attachment I-E states identify the intensive SE services your organization is able to provide. Please explain what you are looking for</p> | <p>The section continues onto the next page where an applicant would identify Intake, Core 1, Core 2, Core 3</p> |
| <p>14. Do we need to bid a proposed number of "bonus for quality," "bonus for hours/week" in the RFP</p> | <p>Yes. Enter the number of units being requested on Attachment 1-I</p> |
| <p>15. Can work readiness be used with SE Core Services?</p> | <p>Work readiness may be prior to SE Milestones when it is deemed appropriate for the consumer as determined by the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor</p> |

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| 16. SE Extended: Will SE providers need to "renew" or initiate a new agreements for SE Extended Services with ACCES-VR? | No. If already known to ACCES-VR, no further action is required for ACCES-VR. New providers should refer to the RFP #13-001 Core Rehabilitation Services Extended Services section, for additional information. |
| 17. In the CRS-RFP attachment E-1 there is a 2 line paragraph that states that proposals must include confirmation of extended service agreements with other state agencies. What type of document will suffice to confirm this? | Any of the following will satisfy this requirement: A copy of the extended service contract; A letter from the contracting state agency A printout from the VENDREP system? |
| 18. Can providers utilize TTW as an extended source, and list that on the RFP? | Yes, however you must meet the requirements related to extended services through OPWDD/OMH as applicable to the population(s) you are serving. |
| 19. If a provider has an agreement with OPWDD for SE extended, they should not apply for ACCES-VR extended? | It would depend upon the population the provider serves |
| 20. Can a consumer go from Direct Placement to OMH ongoing extended or ACCES-VR extended? | No |
| 21. How will budget deficits impact natural supports, both now and in a year if individuals still require it? How will budget deficits impact vocational supports, such as day hab programs – now and in the future? | ACCES has been fortunate in retaining SE extended funding and is optimistic for the future. Unfortunately, there are no guarantees. |
| 22. We currently have a program, and have a current Federal certificate of exemption to paying the minimum wage. Will it be permissible to pay program participants funded under this RFP, the rate we paid to current supported employment mobile crew workers, based on the certificate of exemption. | There is an option for individuals to be employed below minimum wage and closed successfully as non competitive supported employment. However there is also a requirement that we can document the individual as "working toward minimum wage". If there is no opportunity to achieve that level of pay under the certificate of exemption, then this would not be an allowable outcome under Milestones. |
| 23. For Job Placement 45 and 90 days or employment – is this for days worked on on-the-job? | No it is calendar days and there is no 90 day milestone. The Core 4 milestone is rehabilitation which will be reviewed at 90 days and can occur at 90 days, but must first meet outcome policy guidelines |
| 24. Will the OPWDD transfer cases remain at the same payment level? Can you confirm these dollars will continue to be provided? | The rate of OMRDD transfer cases is \$3,200. This is for existing consumers only. New consumers are not eligible. |
| 25. Is an individual in extended services after they reach 90 days on the job or at the stabilization point (generally 6-8 weeks following the start of the job)? | An individual enters extended services after they are closed as rehabilitated. Ninety days on the job is only a review point for closure. Stability on the job is the goal for employment and is reviewed at the end of the 90 day period. |
| 26. Is there a time limit for someone to be funded in extended services? | No, but we are emphasizing the use of natural supports at the start of employment and focusing on the options of Intermittent Extended and |

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| | Graduation as options for those individuals who reach a higher level of independence through support, experience and training |
| 27. If a consumer is placed and loses their job after the 45 days milestone, will ACCES-VR re-issue job development and placement 5 & 45 milestones if a second job is found? | In this situation, Job Development (Core 1) will be re authorized at ½ the original value. Core 4 Rehabilitation and the Quality bonus areas will remain in effect from the original Authorization. Day 5 and 45 will not be re authorized. |
| 28. If a person is placed in a job and they are not performing up to the employers expectations at day 45, does he provider still get paid for the milestone? | Yes, as long as the consumer remains on the job. |
| 29. If a consumer leaves one supported employment provider agency having not achieved a rehab, are they eligible for milestone payments with the new provider? Including the Intake? | They are eligible at the new provider for all milestones if the VRC determines that a change in providers will offer a better opportunity to succeed. Intake will follow the same guidelines a previously provided. |
| 30. In SE when SEMP billing begins, can you be in a core at the same time? | Double billing is not allowed. |
| 31. Case Service Code is not mentioned in Attachment 1-E. Do we need to explain our strategy for providing this service? | Please respond to the questions asked on the Individual Service Forms. Include as much supporting information as you believe pertinent to the question. |
| 32. Can an agency bill for Intake if the individual has received services from our agency, other than employment, can we bill for Intake on a person in workshop or day hab? | The services cannot be authorized if the placement vendor or the placement component of the vendor has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Served the consumer within the last 12 months; or, • The consumer has received any training or placement services from the vendor |
| 33. Can 110X, 100X and 112X be used prior to or to help determine SE? | Yes, but will be determined by the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor |
| 34. CSC 572X – 5 hours monthly – for how long? | This is an outcome based service and does not have a specified time frame. |
| 35. How will this affect exiting NYSOMH – On-going Integrated Supported Employment contracts? | Contact OMH directly for a response |
| 36. Can a vendor bill for transportation I and II if an individual is receiving supported employment services? | Yes |
| 37. What if the consumer refuses to provide pay stubs? | Attestation by the employer will be acceptable |
| 38. Cores 1, 2 and 3 make reference to calendar days requiring a minimum of work for three days. Are there minimum hours for those 3 days? | No |
| Assistive Technology/ Rehabilitation Technology Services | |
| 1 Does a vendor get paid additionally for travel time, | No |

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| expenses, time to write the evaluation reports? | |
| 2 Do the rates include the cost of equipment? | No |
| 3 If we do not currently have a contract but are referred to by ACCES-VR counselors for assistive technology evaluations, can we still be referred to if we do not receive a contract? | No |
| Driver Rehabilitation Services | |
| 1. Does "Specialized Driver" training include adapted special tech methodologies required for specific disabilities (ADD, ADHD, Spectrum disorders, LD, etc) where there is no adaptive equipment? | This could be considered under Low-Tech |
| 2. Under definition "evaluation and training necessary for the individual to competently operate his/her modified vehicle" – Does this include work with individuals who do not require vehicle mods but require modified teaching and methods? | No |
| 3. In the Adaptive Driver Section - For Low Tech (133X) the standard would be a report within 30 calendar days but for High Tech (134X) the standard is 21 calendar days. Why does the lower tech require a longer time period. If we were not keeping it consistent, it would seem the higher tech would require more rather than less in terms of time. | The standard has been changed to 30 days for all services in the adaptive drivers training section |
| 4. I am often asked to travel more than 1 hour to provide door-to-door service for driving instruction. Example – the consumer is 1.25 hours from my office – I travel 2.5 hours round trip; I see the consumer 10 hours. Am I correct that there is no reason for concern as long as the travel (142X) and other services rendered don't go over my annual or five year contract value? | 142X is for travel time and 133X, 134X, 880X and 881X are at different rates and not simultaneous. All applicants should bid for the capacity they can effectively provide to ACCES-VR consumers. |
| Adjunct Services | |
| 1. If staff have been trained at Cornell on various benefits prior to creation of the new credential requirements for benefits achievement for adjunct services, can they be grandfathered in? | Criteria for Benefits Advisement staffing is listed under Adjunct Services |
| 2. Can training from a reputable entity such as Benefits | See #1 |

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| 3. Can you clarify why the staffing requirements for Coaching Supports-Not job placement related only requires a High School diploma? It would seem that in order to be most effective in delivering a service related to post secondary education the staff should have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree. | Individual programs have the ability to increase the requirements of their staff above the minimum qualifications included in this RFP. |
| 4. In rural counties or in areas where public transportation does not exist or not readily accessible; can <u>Transportation 1</u> monies be utilized to cover cab fare? | Yes |
| 5. Does transportation reimbursement cover para-transit and agency vehicle transportation? If so, how would a vendor be reimbursed for agency vehicle transportation? | Yes. See Adjunct Services Section |
| 6. Can a provider provide Transportation Level II to consumers of their specific program or would we have to provide transportation to other vendors? | Approved vendors are able to provide transportation services to their specific consumers and/or other vendors |
| 7. Under Transportation II, does the "round trips provided to facilitate consumer ability to participate in core services" include transportation to and from employment obtained, community based work try-outs, and interviews? Or are these round trips considered only for travel between skills support and/or job searching activities? | Services provided to all ACCES-VR consumers will be determined by the ACCES-VR Counselor. |
| 8. Can adjunct services (mobility) be used in conjunction with direct placement – either prior or during? | Counselors will make the decision of services required for a consumer based on their Individualized Plan for Employment |
| 9. Would mobility services cover consumers under Coaching Supports and Supported Employment? For example, the referral would reference code 959M for mobility services related to coaching supports and 572M for mobility services related to SE? | No |
| Performance Indicators / Rubric | |
| 1. What happens if a vendor does not achieve the established performance indicator? Is there a process? | Please refer to Method of Award Section |
| 2. Per RFP, page 8 – are outcomes, quality and timeliness the | See Appendix II. Performance indicators are listed at the end of each service |

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| <p>three performance indicators? If so, are there standards associated with each? Additionally, may we have a copy of the rubric that ACCESS-VR has developed?</p> | <p>throughout the RFP.</p> |
| <p>Reporting</p> | |
| <p>1. How do the CRS system services interface (if at all) with the NYS Employment Service System? And payments for that?</p> | <p>Payments are not linked to NYS Employment Service System reporting</p> |