

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act **- *a first look* at the changes for VR**

Presented to
All ACCES-VR Staff

March 10, 2015

April 2, 2015

April 30, 2015

Impact on ACCES-VR

Background

- **Signed into law by the President on July 22, 2014**
- **Effective July 1, 2015**
- **Promulgation of regulations is required for implementation**

Background

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** authorizes federal workforce legislation for 6 years: 2015 – 2020
- **“Core Programs”**– Amends/reauthorizes 4 programs
 1. **Workforce Investment Act of 1998** – The nations primary programs and investments in employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation activities. Due for reauthorization since 2003.
 2. **Adult Education and Family Literacy Act**
 3. **Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933**
 4. **Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Timetable

- **January 20, 2015:** Draft regulations to implement WIOA are published (180 days after enactment) – POSTPONED Until “Spring” 2015
- **July 1, 2015:** Provisions take effect, unless otherwise noted in the Act (1st full program year after enactment)
- **January 22, 2016:** Final Rules to implement WIOA (18 months after enactment) – May be delayed depending on when Draft Regulations and Public Comment Period.
- **March 3, 2016:** Deadline for States to submit *Unified* State Plan (120 days before 2nd full PY)
- **July 1, 2016:** Unified State Plan, performance accountability provisions, and One-Stop infrastructure cost requirements take effect

Adult Services – Title I of WIOA

- **Adopts existing best practices** such as: Career Pathways (including Adult Basic Education, English for Speakers of other Languages, and occupational training); Sector-based partnerships; and Certificates and credentials linked to business demand.
- **On-the-Job training** – Up to 75% reimbursement of an employee's wages
- **Incumbent worker training** – Up to 20% of Local adult and Dislocated Workers (DW) funds
- **Transitional jobs** – Up to 10% of Local adult and DW funds _ pays wages
- **Pay for performance contracts**

Youth Services – Title I of WIOA

- **Focuses on out-of-school youth; High School dropout recovery efforts, youth with disabilities, and recognized postsecondary credentials.**
- 75% of funding to support out-of-school youth (State and Local)
20% of this is for work-based activities
- Age eligibility – Out-of-school is ages 16 to 24 and In-school is ages 14 to 21
- Expands “low income” eligibility definition to include free or reduced lunch

Performance Accountability

- **Common set of primary indicators of performance for Adults and Youth for the Core programs**
 - Adult – Unsubsidized employment; Earnings; Secondary diploma or recognized postsecondary credential; Measurable skills gains toward a credential or employment; and business engagement.
 - Youth – Education or training activities or unsubsidized employment; Earnings; Secondary diploma or recognized postsecondary credential; Measurable skills gains toward a credential or employment; and Business engagement.
- **Performance goals for each indicator; for each Core Program**

WIOA Title IV – The Rehabilitation Act

- Findings: Students with disabilities leaving school without jobs or postsecondary training
- Purpose: a) employers have input and b) youth with disabilities have opportunities for success
- Defines: Youth with Disability – not younger than 14 and not older than 24 years
- Defines: Competitive Integrated Employment
- Supported Employment - “intensive” phase from 18 to 24 months

WIOA Title IV – The Rehabilitation Act

- CSPD – broadens the qualifications for VR staff toward a “21st century understanding of the evolving labor force”
- Eligibility – inserts “advance in” employment consistent with employment factors
- Presumption of eligibility - - - more detail and stronger expectation than if we use “06”, we do trial work experience, even supported employment

The Rehabilitation Act – IPE Development

- IPE: as soon as possible but not later than 90 days
- IPE: For individuals on SSI/SSD, VR will provide additional supports and assistance including assistance with benefits planning
- Emphasize use of assistive technology services and coordination with state program under the Assistive Technology Act
- For students, IPE outlines services toward employment outcome or ***“projected postschool employment outcome”***

The Rehabilitation Act – VR Services

- Customized Employment – defined and in scope of services
- Advanced training in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Careers
- Revised “Services to Groups” section – more flexible
 - transition services to youth and students with disabilities
 - Assistive Technology demos, loan programs and financing
- Services to Employers (Section 109) – All new training and technical assistance on disability awareness, work-based learning opportunities, recruitment and retention.

Focus on Students, Youth and New Youth Services

- The scope of vocational rehabilitation services is expanded to include newly defined **Pre-Employment Transition Services** to students with disabilities
- 15% of VR dollars must be used to deliver the required activities under **Pre-Employment Transition Services**
- **Pre-Employment Transition Services** are broken down into Required services (we must offer) and Authorized services (we can offer if we choose)
- **For youth with most significant disabilities**, a provision in the supported employment section allows us to pay for time-limited extended services using our federal VR funds

Pre-Employment Transition Services: Required

WIOA Title IV _ Pre-Employment Transition Services *Required* Activities

- job exploration training
- work-based learning experiences
- counseling on postsecondary options
- workplace readiness training
- instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

Pre-Employment Transition Services: Authorized

Pre-Employment Transition Services - - - *Authorized Activities*

- Strategies to increase likelihood of independent living and inclusion in competitive workplaces
- Developing strategies for individuals with significant disabilities to participate in postsecondary education experiences and obtain employment
- Providing instruction to VRCs and school personnel on supporting students with disabilities

New Service: Pre-Employment Transition Services

- - - *Authorized Activities*

- Disseminating information on innovative, effective and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section;
- Coordinating activities with transition by schools under IDEA
- Applying evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedures and practices for youth

New Service: Pre-Employment Transition Services

- - - *Authorized Activities*

- Developing **Model Transition Demonstration Projects**
- Developing multi-state or regional cross-systems partnerships
- Disseminating strategies to improve transition for *traditionally underserved populations*

Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordination

Pre-Employment Transition Services – Each state VR agency local office must:

- Attend IEP meetings for students when invited
- Work with local workforce/one stop centers and employers to develop work opportunities for students, including internships, summer employment, etc.
- Ensure pre-employment transition services happen
- Attend person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under Medicaid HCBS waiver when invited

Conclusion

- **The VR program is now more focused on serving youth - - it is a major change in the role of the VR Program and for all of us**
- **We are prepared due to the formation of the Statewide Transition and Youth Services Team, the CRS YES and the Regional VR Community Employment Specialist Project**
- **Opportunities for VR to make a difference in the lives of youth and adults through services and through work with employers**