

Kansas Rehabilitation Services

State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation & Supported Employment Services Federal Fiscal Years 2014-2016

Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

Mission -- Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS)
*Working in partnership with Kansans with disabilities
to achieve their goals for employment and independence.*

Background

In Federal Fiscal Year 2007, Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS) launched an ambitious long-term strategic plan based on:

- The core principle that competitive, integrated employment is the avenue to self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion, economic equality, and integration into society for people with disabilities.
- Results of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment, which included extensive opportunities for consumers, service providers and advocacy groups to provide input.
- An analysis of the agency's performance on federal standards and indicators.
- Monitoring and agency performance reviews or audits.
- Numerous work sessions with the State Rehabilitation Council on development of goals and priorities.

The result of that work focused the attention of the agency on achieving four primary goals. These goals related to:

- Quality, competitive, integrated employment outcomes for Kansans with disabilities
- Accountability
- Improved outreach and outcomes for transition-aged youth
- The meaningful involvement of people with disabilities in KRS operations

In the ensuing years, those goals have been consistently reaffirmed through stakeholder input and by the State Rehabilitation Council. In preparation for development of the new State Plan for FFY 2014-2016, KRS again conducted stakeholder meetings, developed a comprehensive needs assessment, and analyzed the additional factors listed above. Throughout this process, the four major goals were reaffirmed.

Therefore, the goals for FFY 2014-2016 represent a continuation of the KRS strategic direction. Some strategies and indicators have been modified based upon emerging issues. The baseline for most indicators continues to be FFY 2006, the performance year just prior to implementation of this strategic plan in 2007 Using this baseline allows KRS to:

- Maintain accountability including stable data sources.
- Identify data trends over numerous years.
- Track progress achieved since initial implementation.
- Identify areas for ongoing performance improvement.

Please see Attachment 4.11(e)(2) for a current report of progress.

Goals and priorities FFY 2014-2016

Goal #1: Kansans with disabilities will achieve quality, competitive, integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Strategies for Goal #1:

KRS will implement the following strategies:

- A. Communicate with consumers, advocates, service providers, education authorities, the disability service delivery system and staff to foster a cultural shift that emphasizes the value of employment rather than benefits as the avenue to self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion, economic equality, and integration into society.
- B. Emphasize both the potential of people with disabilities and the perspective of employment as the avenue to self-sufficiency in all staff training.
- C. Support peer mentoring of people with disabilities that encourages employment and empowers individuals to risk leaving the benefits system.
- D. Support assistive technology services that enhance employability.
- E. Identify and support best practices that encourage high-wage/career track employment. Implement a service provider agreement to support placement of clients in employment while they pursue additional career-track services through VR.
- F. Coordinate with the systems for community mental health centers and community developmental disability organizations and affiliates to

increase the expectations for the percent of persons served pursuing competitive, integrated employment.

- G. Pursue opportunities to conduct a longitudinal study that measures the full impact of employment on the lives of people with disabilities, using a holistic approach that measures a range of dimensions such as earnings, poverty, community integration and inclusion, civic participation, and other quality of life issues.
- H. Pursue options for securing technical assistance for consumers and counselors related to the development and implementation of small business and self-employment plans.
- I. Collaborate with service providers/contractors to enhance community-based capacity to provide rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, and communication skills training to meet the employment-related needs of people who are blind or visually impaired.
- J. Increase the successful employment and rehabilitation rate of recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) through the use of intensive case management, and thereby increase the amount of Social Security reimbursement dollars paid to the agency.
- K. Establish a Partnership Plan with the Kansas Department of Corrections to increase participation in VR services and employment outcomes for offenders with disabilities.

Indicators for Goal #1:

KRS will achieve or exceed the required federal standards for the following indicators:

- 1.1 The number of persons achieving employment outcomes will equal or exceed the previous year.
Baseline FFY 2006: 1,746
- 1.2 The percentage of individuals rehabilitated who achieve competitive employment will equal or exceed 72.6%.
Baseline FFY 2006: 97%

- 1.3 The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the program in competitive employment as a ratio to the average hourly earnings for all employed Kansans will equal or exceed .52.
Baseline FFY 2006: .56
- 1.4 Of the individuals who achieve competitive employment, the difference between the percent who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at closure compared to the percent at application. The difference must equal or exceed 53.
Baseline FFY 2006: 59

KRS will equal or improve performance when compared to the baseline for the following measurable indicators:

- 1.5 The average number of hours worked by persons rehabilitated.
Baseline FFY 2006: 30.74 weekly
- 1.6 The percent of employment outcomes in technical, managerial and professional occupations.
Baseline FFY 2006: 18.6%
- 1.7 The number of KRS SSI recipients and SSDI beneficiaries for whom KRS receives reimbursement funding. To meet this standard, the individuals must achieve the Substantial Gainful Activity earnings level for at least nine months.
Baseline FFY 2006: 54
- 1.8 The amount of Social Security reimbursement dollars paid to the agency.
Baseline FFY 2012: \$748,528
- 1.9 The percent of persons rehabilitated in full-time competitive employment who are covered by health insurance through employment.
Baseline FFY 2006: 52%
- 1.10 The number of successful employment outcomes achieved by consumers after participating in post-secondary education.
Baseline FFY 2006: 392
- 1.11 The number of persons referred from the Department of Corrections who achieve employment outcomes through VR.
Baseline to be determined in FFY 2014.

Goal #2: KRS, its consumers, providers and partners will be accountable for the achievement of employment and the effective use of resources.

Strategies for Goal #2:

KRS will implement the following strategies:

- A. Organize and align resources and policies to support people with disabilities in achieving employment as the avenue to self-sufficiency.
- B. Emphasize meaningful consumer involvement, choice and responsibility.
- C. Develop, implement and maintain a competency-based professional development system for counselors, including specific focus areas related to:
 - Effective development and management of Individual Plans for Employment
 - Best practices related to matching services with the consumer's rehabilitation needs, goals and priorities
 - Informed choice and consumer engagement
 - Effective career counseling and guidance related to employment as the avenue to self-sufficiency
 - Best practices related to serving persons who are blind or visually impaired, and persons with mental illness, Autism Spectrum Disorders, or traumatic brain injury
 - Cultural competence
 - Accountable decision-making
 - Connecting consumers with technical assistance for small business and self-employment plans
 - Use of comparable benefits
 - Basic benefits counseling related to issues surrounding employment
 - Expertise related to disability populations served
 - Leadership development
 - Interviewing techniques, such as motivational interviewingService providers will be included in training opportunities whenever possible to enhance their ability to support the competitive, integrated employment goals of KRS consumers.

- D. Develop, implement and maintain a competency-based Executive Training Program for Rehabilitation Managers and Program Administrators. Training will emphasize the Rehabilitation Act, implementing regulations, KRS policies, fiscal accountability, counselor-level focus areas (described in Strategy C above), coaching for improved performance, deficits identified through the case review process, data analysis, and leadership development. Establish expectations for Rehabilitation Managers and Program Administrators to present regional training to their staff.
- E. Explore opportunities for development of on-line training modules consistent with KRS-established competency-based training programs.
- F. Manage and administer case service funds, provider agreements and grants to achieve maximum benefit in numbers and quality of employment outcomes.
- G. Align staff performance accountability measures with KRS goals and priorities. Explore options for measuring staff responsiveness and establishing related expectations.
- H. Provide clear expectations for providers, contractors and other business partners. Conduct a rate study and evaluation of current service provider performance. Investigate the relationship between training/credentials and quality outcomes to identify provider qualification standards and training options.
- I. Partner with the workforce system and other sources of comparable benefits and services to maximize the resources needed to empower people with disabilities to achieve employment. Collaborate with the Department of Commerce to implement the Employer Partner Incentive Program which is funded with 100% State General Funds.
- J. Update and maintain quality assurance and accountability system that includes ongoing case reviews addressing such issues as consistency with policy, timeliness, evidence of effective career counseling and guidance, effective use of resources, and employment outcomes.
- K. Explore opportunities to increase access to supported employment, job coaching and job placement services.

- L. Improve KRS ability to collect and analyze data related to outcomes and performance trends. Develop updated reports on provider performance to assist clients in selecting services, to assist KRS and its providers in monitoring performance and to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.
- M. Pursue opportunities for cross-informational training between KRS and key stakeholder groups, including service delivery systems for persons with developmental disabilities or mental illness, special education personnel, contractors and others interested in learning more about how the VR program can support the competitive, integrated employment goals of Kansans with disabilities.
- N. Develop, implement and maintain a comprehensive system to prevent, detect and correct negligent or fraudulent practices or actions related to the use of public resources.
- This system will include the ongoing expectation for Central Office Staff, Regional Program Administrators and Unit Rehabilitation Managers to review outlier and repetitive expenditures on a monthly basis, following up to verify the validity of payments consistent with federal regulations and state policy.
 - The case review system will continue to be used to assess correct use of service codes, which are tied to specific spending authorities and approvals.
 - The case review system will continue to be used to assess adherence to procurement policies and procedures established by the state, the department and KRS.
 - The service code system will be reviewed and updated in FFY 2012 to assure that appropriate and current controls are in place for all services.
 - The Kansas Management Information System will be updated to automatically refer expenditures that exceed counselor authority to supervisory levels for final approval.
 - A program competency on fiscal management will be added to the performance evaluation system for all counselors effective November 1, 2012 (the start of the next review period.) Fiscal management objectives are already established on the performance evaluation system for Program Administrators and Rehabilitation Managers.
 - Regions will review KRS professional conduct standards at staff meetings annually.
 - Counselor training will emphasize fiscal responsibilities.

- O. As required by federal Order of Selection regulations, conduct periodic analysis of counselor turnover, caseload size, the capacity of existing human resources to effectively manage caseloads, the achievement of outcomes, effectiveness of work flow processes, and compliance with federal standards/indicators. Develop strategies to address deficits as necessary.
- P. Analyze reasons for non-employment closures, such as failure to cooperate, unable to locate and refusal of services. Identify regional-specific strategies to improve the rehabilitation rate.
- Q. Investigate options for establishing state-level certification, licensing or registration for vocational rehabilitation counselors employed by KRS.
- R. Develop plans to modernize the Kansas Management Information System (KMIS), which is the VR client demographics, case management and fiscal data system.

Indicators for Goal #2:

KRS will achieve or exceed the required federal standard for the following indicator:

- 2.1 Rehabilitation rate will equal or exceed 55.8%.
Baseline FFY 2006: 55.3%

KRS will equal or improve performance when compared to the baseline for the following measurable indicators:

- 2.2 Percent for whom eligibility is determined in 60 days or less from application unless the customer agrees to an extension.
Baseline FFY 2006: 86%
- 2.3 Percent of accurate presumptive eligibility decisions for persons eligible for SSI or SSDI.
Baseline FFY 2006: 91%
- 2.4 Percent for whom IPEs are developed within 120 days or less from eligibility unless the customer agrees to an extension.
Baseline FFY 2006:

- 2.5 Average consumer satisfaction rating using the ACSI index model (ratings above 5 indicate "more satisfied than not").
Baseline SFY 2007: 6.6
- 2.6 Average stakeholder (education personnel, advocates and service providers) rating using the ACSI model.
Baseline: 5.7
- 2.7 Average case service expenditures per rehabilitation for the life of the case.
Baseline FFY 2006: \$7,889
- 2.8 Annual number of persons served (status 02-24 +32).
Baseline FFY 2006: 15,178
- 2.9 Annual contribution to IPE costs through comparable benefits and services.
Baseline: To be established in FFY 2013 (timeline depends on access to information technology staff to complete the necessary programming).
- 2.10 Annual contribution to IPE costs through comparable benefits and services provided through one-stop workforce centers.
Baseline: To be established in FFY 2013 (timeline depends on access to information technology staff to complete the necessary programming).
- 2.11 The rehabilitation rate of persons referred to job placement or supported employment providers.
Baseline SFY 2006: 41.8%
- 2.12 The average wage achieved by persons referred to placement or supported employment providers.
Baseline SFY 2006: \$7.37
- 2.13 Average consumer satisfaction ratings of placement and supported employment providers measured at the time of KRS case closure.
Baseline: To be established
- 2.14 Percent of case review results for which there is evidence that the consumer had the opportunity to exercise informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process.
Baseline FFY 2010: 86%

- 2.15 Percent of case review results for which there is evidence that the service provider was given clear information about the consumer's employment goals and expectations.
Baseline FFY 2010: 94%
- 2.16 Percent of case review results for which referral to a job placement or supported employment service provider was appropriate based on the individual needs of the consumer.
Baseline FFY 2010: 98%
- 2.17 Percent of cases reviewed for which there was evidence of counseling/guidance related to maximizing employment and high-wage, career-track employment options.
Baseline FFY 2010: 49%
- 2.18 Percent of cases reviewed for which correct use of service codes was demonstrated.
Baseline FFY 2011: 93%
- 2.19 Percent of cases reviewed for which adherence to procurement policies and procedures was demonstrated.
Baseline FFY 2011: 91.5%
- 2.20 Number of potential fraud cases submitted for investigation by the Department for Children and Families (DCF) Fraud Unit.
Baseline to be determined in FFY 2013
- 2.21 Dollars recovered after investigation and action by the DCF Fraud Unit.
Baseline to be determined in FFY 2013
- 2.22 Percent of Regional Program Administrators and Unit Rehabilitation Managers who meet expectations related to fiscal management through the evaluation process.
Baseline FFY 2011: 100%
- 2.23 Percent of counselors who meet or exceed expectations for the fiscal management competency in the performance evaluation system. (This competency was implemented for the performance evaluation year that began November 1, 2012.)
Baseline to be determined in FFY 2013.

2.24 Number of employment outcomes for which the employer received an Employer Partner Incentive Program payment from the Kansas Department of Commerce. (Incentive funded by State General Funds.) Baseline to be established in FFY 2013.

Goal #3: KRS will emphasize the employment potential of students with disabilities and improve the outreach and outcomes for transition-aged students.

Strategies for Goal #3:

KRS will implement the following strategies:

- A. Increase the number of targeted outreach activities with students, parents, and school personnel related to employment expectations for students with disabilities. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop informational materials for students, families and school personnel. Explore opportunities to collaborate with benefits planning entities to address employment incentives and supports with transition youth and their families.
- B. Improve the outreach and referral process with transition students, parents and education to encourage more clear communication and increased applications for services. Target at least one outreach effort per year to each secondary school nurse to identify students with 504 plans who could benefit from vocational rehabilitation.
- C. Build partnerships with school transition personnel to encourage that career-focused and work-based experiences are incorporated into Individual Education Plans.
- D. Work with youth with disabilities, the Kansas State Department of Education, Local Education Authorities, parent organizations and families to encourage early discussions with students about the expectations of employment and their skills, abilities and talents that will empower them to achieve self-sufficiency.
- E. Explore funding opportunities, innovative approaches, and research-based practices to engage transition-age students with disabilities in establishing goals toward employment and self-sufficiency.
- F. Collaborate with Prevention and Protection Services to increase awareness in the foster care system about transition and vocational

rehabilitation services to empower foster care youth with disabilities to achieve competitive, integrated employment and self-sufficiency.

Indicators for Goal #3:

KRS will equal or improve performance when compared to the baseline for the following measurable indicators:

- 3.1 Number of new applications from transition youth.
Baseline FFY 2006: 755
- 3.2 Number of new IPEs for transition youth.
Baseline FFY 2006: 369
- 3.3 Rehabilitation rate for transition youth.
Baseline FFY 2006: 50%
- 3.4 Number of employment outcomes achieved by consumers who were transition-aged at the time of application for services.
Baseline FFY 2007: 428
- 3.5 Of the transition students who achieve competitive employment, the difference between the percent who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at closure compared to the percent at application. (When considered for all KRS consumers, this difference must equal or exceed 53 according to federal standards.)
Baseline FFY 2006: 72
- 3.6 Average hourly wage of transition students rehabilitated.
Baseline FFY 2006: \$8.08
- 3.7 By 2015, the work of the VR program will result in 100 youth with disabilities (ages 21 or younger at the time of application) who had previously been in foster care achieving competitive, integrated employment as adults.
Baseline to be established in FFY 2013.
- 3.8 By 2015, the application rate for VR services will be increased to at least 50% of youth with disabilities ages 16 and older in foster care.
Baseline to be established in FFY 2013.

Goal #4: KRS will emphasize the meaningful involvement of people with disabilities, public/private partners, employers and other stakeholders in KRS programs, services and activities.

Strategies for Goal #4:

KRS will implement the following strategies:

- A. Support the State Rehabilitation Council and the Advisory Committee for Kansans who are Blind and Visually Impaired to build capacity for community involvement and participation.
- B. Expand targeted outreach efforts to support the mission and goals of KRS and to reach underserved populations.
- C. Collaborate with the State Rehabilitation Council to develop a targeted marketing strategy for employers and to increase awareness among employers of available incentives.
- D. Collaborate with the State Rehabilitation Council to identify and implement best practices related to preparing clients to meet the expectations of employers for soft skills such as customer service, co-worker interaction, taking direction from supervisors, and attendance.
- E. Conduct meetings with provider groups.
- F. Include consumers and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of staff training and outreach activities.
- G. Explore issues surrounding disability disclosure to potential employers during the job placement process, and identify best practices that meet the confidentiality needs of clients as well as the workforce/hiring needs of employers.
- H. Explore collaborative initiatives with the rehabilitation counselor master's degree program at Emporia State University to increase the number of graduates interested in employment with KRS.
- I. Conduct in-depth regional analysis of services for unserved, underserved and minority groups in order to target outreach initiatives.

Indicators for Goal #4:

KRS will achieve or exceed the required federal standards for the following indicators:

- 4.1 The percent of individuals who have significant disabilities among those who achieve competitive employment will be at least 62.4%.
Baseline FFY 2006: 96%
- 4.2 The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio of the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities will equal or exceed .80.
Baseline FFY 2006: .92

KRS will equal or improve performance when compared to the baseline for the following measurable indicators:

- 4.3 Number of annual statewide stakeholder meetings.
Baseline FFY 2008: 6 communities