



## Department of Aging and Disability Services



### Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

### State Rehabilitation Council Agenda

Teams Meeting – May 14, 2025

1p.m.- 3:30p.m.

**Attendees:** Tom Cosker, Joseph Wendover, Stephanie Trelli, Kate Travis, Tara Baldwin, Laura Luna, Andrea Richardson, Brian Smith, Carissa Decelles, Beth Reel, Robert Nims, Fred Brisbois

**Non-voting members:** Dave Doukas, Stephanie Trelli

**SRC Liaison:** Kerri Fradette

**Excused absence:** Jill Larmett, Lauren Maurice, Contessa Big-Crow Jenkins, Linda Rammler

#### Welcome and introductions – Chairperson, Kate T

Review/approve minutes- minutes approved

NCSRC conference updates- first meeting combined with CSAVR for a portion. There are a lot of leadership changes within NCSRC and CSAVR due to retirements.

Next NCSRC conference in San Diego, CA Nov 1-2, 2025

Stephanie Trelli is interested in attending the Fall conference.

#### Budget – Treasurer, Carissa D – same as last meeting no changes reported

**Client Assistance Program Updates –** Tom Cosker -VR communication disagreement with services. Communication with consumer vs VR remains an issue but nothing that is bubbling up. Nothing from clients that is showing a trend. Still low with calls and not a lot of clients, tracks with VR as #'s creep up, not a big increase in issues. Role as the CAP not a ton of activity or specific trends.

How is the message being communicated about CAP? This could be a communication breakdown, targeted outreach is important. Average person with a disability does not know about CAP. Changes in outreach. Where is that information being shared with new staff?

Stephanie T:CAP information listed on all paperwork, new counselors, call CAP regarding any discrimination in the workplace, besides BRS, a lot of calls originated by counselors.

Outreach suggestions: Tom C to come out to regional meetings? Regionally they are held once a month. Youth unit once a month also. Discrimination complaints should go to CHRO.



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### BRS Updates – BRS Director David Doukas

New procurement for CRP's changing what services and capacity looks like to help with current capacity issues. Giving counselors tasks to work effectively and working towards providing resources to support CRPs effectively.

Stephanie T. we need to have challenging discussions with consumers about what the realistic limitations may or may not be and how can we provide the resources to help consumers achieve goals? It's a fine line trying not to be dream crushers while allowing individualized consumer choice.

The new Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bureau, Morrison, is building this up and more will be shared later on the progress.

Review BRS Dashboard Data – review of dashboard from March report. Reviewing data and expenditures and discussing any themes. Large case loads for seasoned staff, moving around staff to support bureau as needed. CRP expenditures are \$3.2 and the biggest expenditure is on hearing aids and medical.

All expected funds have been received to date from RSA, we will investigate what funding will look like in the future and there may be consideration with Order of Selection if we are not able to meet all of the needs of the VR program. **Kate T.:** State level of funding is less that we have received in years past.

**Dave D.** -We received less funding received on Purchase of services is less than 2008. VR needs more funding and expanding our transition positions and youth services unit, more capacity to work with more people.

Corrective action plan, BRS dropped from correction action plan.

After August Dave D. will discuss budget with SRC in the fall.

### SRC Discussion (All): CSNA overview

Kerri F. reviewed the CSNA and discussed the purpose of the report and how it is used for planning purposes for the state plan. Themes that were discussed:

- Individuals with mental health impairments are among the largest group of BRS consumers seeking VR services
- The disparity between the disability prevalence rate among Hispanic/Latino populations in the state, and their BRS application and service rates strongly indicates an ongoing need to understand the language/culture factors contributing to the disparity
- BRS application rates are steadily increasing, perhaps indicating a gradual recovery from the impact of COVID-19 on consumer service applications and outcomes.
- The most highly cited category was *BRS slow service delivery*.
- some consumers highlighted service capacity issues, with comments such as *not enough job coaches and too many clients*, or *no CRPs* and *shortage of ASL interpreters*. training.
- A dominant theme that emerged was delays and lack of responsiveness in BRS services.



## Department of Aging and Disability Services



**SRC Updates** – Kerri – new applicants are at the Governor’s office, check your reappointment dates so that we can make sure everyone is appointed.

### **Committee Updates:**

**Legislation and Policy** -working on consumer choice training with Alicia K.

**Membership**- actively seeking new applicants for SILC rep. Jill L. is looking to diversify the council as needed.

**Program Review**- nothing new to report

**Public Comment** - All

**Next Meeting:** **June 25, 2025, 1-3:30p.m. via TEAMS**