

Post-Meeting Packet

November 2-3, 2021



Washington State
Rehabilitation Council



November 2021 Quarterly Meeting

Table of Contents

<u>Document</u>	<u>Page</u>
Agenda—Day 1	3
Executive Committee	4-5
Partnerships Subcommittee / Partner Updates	6-7
Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP) Presentation	8-14
Policy & Planning Subcommittee	15-17
Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation (CSPE) Subcommittee	18-33
Client Assistance Program (CAP)	34-40
Agenda—Day 2	41
DVR Director Update	42-48
Region 2 and Bellingham Unit Update	49-53
<u>Additional Resources</u>	
Customer Listening Session Summary	54-58
2022 Quarterly Meeting Schedule	59
WSRC / DVR Acronyms	60-63



Quarterly Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, November 2nd, 2021

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

[Click here to join Zoom meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 891 5912 8714

Passcode: 507214

Dial-in Alternative: 253-215-8782

TIME	PRESENTER	AGENDA	DOCUMENT REFERENCE
8:50	Shelby	Sign into Zoom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to login early and troubleshoot connectivity issues so meeting can get started promptly at 9:00am 	
9:00	Peggy Frisk	Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome & Introductions Vote: Approval of August 2021 Quarterly Meeting Minutes 	
9:20	Peggy Frisk or Shelby Satko	Executive Updates	
9:35	Erica Wollen Ivanova Smith Tania May Jen Cole Dion Graham Laurae MacClain	Partnership Subcommittee (estimated 5-7 min each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board Developmental Disabilities Council Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction & Transition Collaborative Special Education Advisory Council State Independent Living Council (5 min) Tribal VR (5 min) 	
10:10	Peggy Frisk	BREAK	
10:25	Alan Knue	Partnership Expanded Update: Washington Technical Assistance Program	
10:40	Michele Stelovich	Policy & Planning Subcommittee	
11:00	Jen Bean	Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation Subcommittee	
11:20	Jen Bean	Client Assistance Program	
11:40	Peggy Frisk	Council Wrap-up	
12:00	Peggy Frisk	ADJOURN	

Tomorrow morning, Day 2 of the WSRC Quarterly Meeting will begin promptly at 9:00am.

Executive Committee Updates

Members: Peggy Frisk – Chair, Jen Bean – Vice-Chair, Erica Wollen, and Michelle Stelovich

Executive Director: Shelby Satko

November 2021

Executive Committee Updates

- Membership Updates
 - New Council Member
 - Edward Nicholson, Business Representative
 - Recruitment
 - Current or former recipient of services
 - Business/Labor
- Annual Report
- Considerations for return to in-person meetings in 2022





Transforming
Lives

Partnerships Subcommittee

Members: Erica Wollen – Chair, Tania May,
Ivanova Smith, Dion Graham

November 2021



Partner Updates

- Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board – Erica Wollen
- Developmental Disabilities Council – Ivanova Smith
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction & Transition Collaborative – Tania May
- Special Education Advisory Council – Jen Chong-Jewell
- State Independent Living Council – Dion Graham
- Tribal VR – Laurae MacClain



Transforming
Lives

Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP)

Alan Knue, Director

November 2021



WATAP- Who we are

The Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP) provides resources and services to persons who face challenges related to disability and aging to help in the selection and use of assistive technology, also known as AT. AT helps make tasks easier or possible in school, at work, at home, and in the community.

WATAP serves seniors and persons with disabilities, and their circle of support, including family members, caregivers, employers, service provider professionals, educators, and others seeking AT expertise.

WATAP's programs

- Device Demonstration
- Device Lending
- Device Reuse
- Alternative Financing
- Information and Assistance
- Public Awareness
- Training and Technical Assistance

WATAP and DVR

Since 2010, WATAP has supported the services provided by DVR through increased awareness of and expansion of access to Assistive Technology (AT) for school and work through a collaboration with the Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP), a program operated by the Center on Technology and Disability Studies (CTDS) at the University of Washington. WATAP will leverage its federally mandated activities to support:

- the professional needs of DVR staff, Tribal VR staff, DVR Contractors, and other DVR partners and increase effective implementation of AT to meet employment outcomes through the delivery of training;
- assistive technology device demonstrations and evaluations provided by the DVR Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioners (ATAPs) through the provision and maintenance of assistive technology provided to the ATAPs; and
- assistive technology device lending for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) and DVR Customers to inform the purchasing decisions and reduce the purchase and storage of devices that end up not working for DVR Customers.

WATAP- Professional Training

From October 1, 2020-September 30, 2021, we provided 11 trainings via webinar* to 365 DVR staff, Tribal VR staff, CRPs, and other DVR partners.

Topics:

- Computer Access:
- AT to Support Farmers and Agriculture Workers
- AT for Cognition and Mental Health
- AT and Transition
- Mobile Technology for Supported Employment

* Pre-pandemic, trainings were provided as half-day sessions in-person across the state.

WATAP- Device Borrowing & Demonstration

From October 1, 2020-September 30, 2021, we provided* 130 devices for decision making purposes to 63 DVR clients in 17 counties:

- Benton: 2
- Clallam: 1
- Clark: 1
- Grays Harbor: 1
- Jefferson: 1
- King: 29
- Kitsap: 2
- Kittitas: 1
- Okanogan: 1
- Pierce: 2
- Skagit: 2
- Snohomish: 4
- Spokane: 1
- Thurston: 4
- Wahkiakum: 1
- Whatcom: 7
- Yakima: 1

From October 1, 2019-September 30, 2020, the ATAPs provided* 60 demonstrations for decision making purposes using AT from their Go Kits and from WATAP's Lending Library to 68 DVR clients.

*with the on-going challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

WATAP- Assistive Technology

- Funds were used to purchase equipment to add to WATAP's Demonstration and Lending Library to support DVR clients including loaner laptops, mobile technology, adaptive software, alternative mousing and keyboard options, technology for sensory disabilities, and technology to support mental health and learning
- WATAP supports Go Kits for ATAPs include:
 - Windows Laptop with Assistive Technology software, including Dragon NatSpeak, TextHelp, ClaroRead SE, Sonocent Audio Notetaker
 - Apple iPad Pro with Assistive Technology apps
 - Amazon Echo Dot Speaker
 - Echo Smart pen
 - Alternative keyboards and mousing options

WATAP and DVR Moving Forward

WATAP staff met with DVR's 3 regional ATAPs on October 28th to discuss:

- WATAP's services and programs;
- WATAP's and DVR's partnership;
- services ATAPs provide; and
- how WATAP and ATAPs can work together most effectively to best serve DVR's clients.



Transforming
Lives

Policy & Planning Subcommittee

Members: Michele Stelovich – Chair, Laurae MacClain,
Lesa Dunphy, Jayson Morris, and Jen Bean

November 2021

Policy & Planning Subcommittee Updates

- Functional Loss: Work skills criteria definition updated
 - Concerns with former verbiage
 - Took into consideration council supported revisions from 2019
 - Updated version allows for greater equity and eligibility
 - Counselors will be trained with the updated definition with the implementation of the new case management system
- Impacts of counselor reassignment
 - SRC sharing customer feedback with DVR leadership
 - Procedures to improve communication and inform customers when staff turnover occurs.

Policy & Planning Subcommittee Updates

- Met with DVR Policy Manager in September
 - New Case management system: WAVES
 - Electronic document system
 - Customer Services Manual
 - DVR teleworking policies
- DVR planning for case reviews in early 2022



Transforming
Lives

Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation Subcommittee

Members: Jen Bean – Chair, Peggy Frisk, and Jen Chong-Jewell

November 2021

Customer Satisfaction Survey: Q2 Highlights

- Customers Surveyed – 409
- Comments Received – 252
 - Shared with DVR – 127
- Response Rate - 35.2%
 - Closed: Rehab – 33.6%
 - Closed: Other after plan – 31.3%
 - Eligible – 39.7%
 - In-Plan – 36.6%
- Overall satisfaction dropped from 69% Q1 to 65% Q2

Customer Satisfaction Survey: Responses

Question 1 - My counselor does a good job keeping in touch with me.

		Closed-Rehab	Closed-Other After Plan	Eligible	Plan	All case status
Region	1	91%	61%	81%	69%	73%
	2	89%	59%	77%	76%	76%
	3	87%	43%	70%	65%	64%
All Region		88%	52%	76%	69%	70%

Question 2 - My counselor understands what is important to me.

		Closed-Rehab	Closed-Other After Plan	Eligible	Plan	All case status
Region	1	82%	47%	79%	79%	71%
	2	89%	61%	83%	81%	79%
	3	90%	42%	72%	73%	67%
All Region		88%	49%	77%	77%	72%

Customer Satisfaction Survey: Responses

Question 3 - My counselor understands how my disability affects me.

		Closed-Rehab	Closed-Other After Plan	Eligible	Plan	All case status
Region	1	73%	59%	64%	76%	67%
	2	89%	59%	72%	79%	76%
	3	93%	56%	60%	75%	69%
All Region		88%	58%	65%	77%	71%

Question 4 - My counselor cares about my input.

		Closed-Rehab	Closed-Other After Plan	Eligible	Plan	All case status
Region	1	82%	66%	79%	85%	78%
	2	86%	55%	76%	82%	75%
	3	93%	58%	74%	83%	75%
All Region		88%	59%	76%	83%	76%

Customer Satisfaction Survey - Responses

Question 5 - DVR moves quickly enough for me

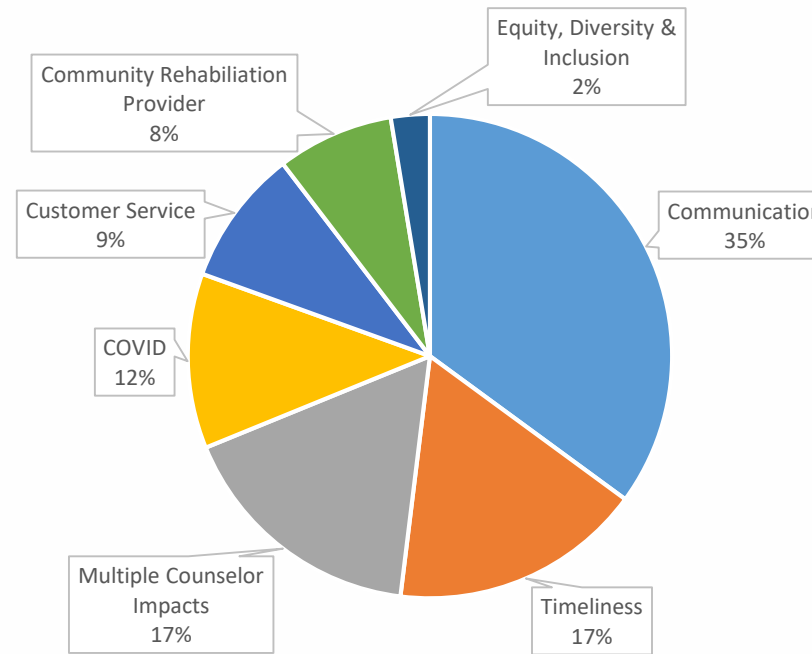
		Closed-Rehab	Closed-Other After Plan	Eligible	Plan	All case status
Region	1	64%	50%	60%	59%	58%
	2	73%	42%	61%	53%	58%
	3	83%	38%	51%	51%	53%
All Region		75%	42%	57%	54%	56%

Question 6 - Overall, I am satisfied with DVR

		Closed-Rehab	Closed-Other After Plan	Eligible	Plan	All case status
Region	1	73%	45%	70%	71%	64%
	2	84%	52%	79%	73%	72%
	3	90%	42%	63%	59%	61%
All Region		85%	46%	70%	67%	65%

Customer Satisfaction Survey: Comments

Comment Categories



Region 1: Sample of Comments

Positive

- I have been very pleased with the services so far that DVR has offered for both my sons. My counselors both return calls or emails within a timely manner and I can see how they bring their best.
- I would recommend it to other people and do it again if given the opportunity, I had a good experience.

Negative

- I have worked with DVR in the past and I have a friend who happens to be white, and I am of Latino descent we were both doing the same thing he was able to get more services and help than I did. I hope that this time around I am able to get the help that I need and not be told excuses instead I want to be helped so that I can accomplish my goals and be a successful productive citizen.
- My DVR counselor is a great guy and really kind and helpful. The problem is, he doesn't keep in touch with me. I have not heard from him in a while even though I keep emailing him. He asked me to keep him informed of how my schooling is going and he doesn't respond. He keeps sending me links to ZOOM meetings but he never sends the date and time of the meeting so how can I attend?

Region 2: Sample of Comments

Positive

- My counselor understood how my disability effects my ability to do certain tasks. She was patient through out the process and let my job counselor and I have the time and support we needed to fine the right job for me. I've been at my job for 6 months and I'm happy and feel valued by management and fellow employees. I now have a job that is the best possible fit and meets all the criteria I had at the beginning of this journey.
- I feel like Maggie Metcalfe's support, belief in my abilities (while still struggling with my TBI) profoundly affected my success today. I can't thank you, DVR, enough for having Maggie on staff. She is an amazing counselor, and I don't know if I could have made it without her. Thank you!!!

Negative

- In the time I was with DVR, I was passed around to 3 workers. I tried asking for a ton of different paths that got shot down one by one instead of working with me to make something I was excited to commit to a reality. The third worker NEVER called me and attempted to throw me out of the program multiple times. Apparently, there was an issue with my compliance, but she never took the time to inform me what I needed to do to be in compliance.
- The staff was resistant or incapable to engage in creative thinking, therefore I would not recommend to anyone who is looking to engage in a self-employed venture.

Region 3: Sample of Comments

Positive

- They're great to work with. They take their time to get to know your strengths and weaknesses. Finding the best position at a job that best meet your strengths. Working along side you to make sure you understand each task required to maintain that job or position you've applied for. Lots of work and research until you are at your final destination.
- I thank DVR for assisting me with my mental disability, ADD and ADHD. I thank all my case managers, counselors for believing in me when I wanted to give up go backwards. I feel DVR saved me from my past experiences with crime and poor judgment w/ friends and encouraged me to stay in school and stay with DVR and work with the case managers and counselors...Luv u DVR...Thanks.

Negative

- I have had an extremely frustrating time in dealing with my counselor. I feel she is there to simply collect a paycheck, not to assist me with my career goals. I hear more about what I can't do or what DVR won't help with. Information that is provided to me is extremely vague and I often find myself backtracking or scrambling to get things done in time because communication and information is not shared effectively nor efficiently.
- There was a high turnover of counselors that were assigned to me. Each time they switched a counselor, you had to start again. I went three years to that location, and I had to start again every time they changed my counselor.

Customer Listening Sessions

- Council and staff met with 7 Bellingham office customers via Zoom
- Customers asked several questions about DVR's response to the pandemic, timeliness of services, and overall satisfaction.
- Feedback mostly positive
- General themes
- Virtual meeting preferences
- What has DVR done well?
- Suggestions for improvement

Sample of Comments

Positive

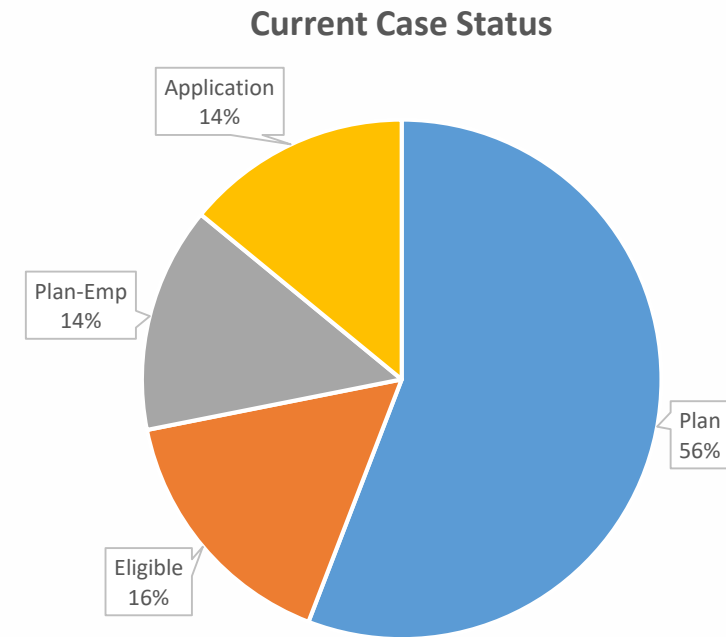
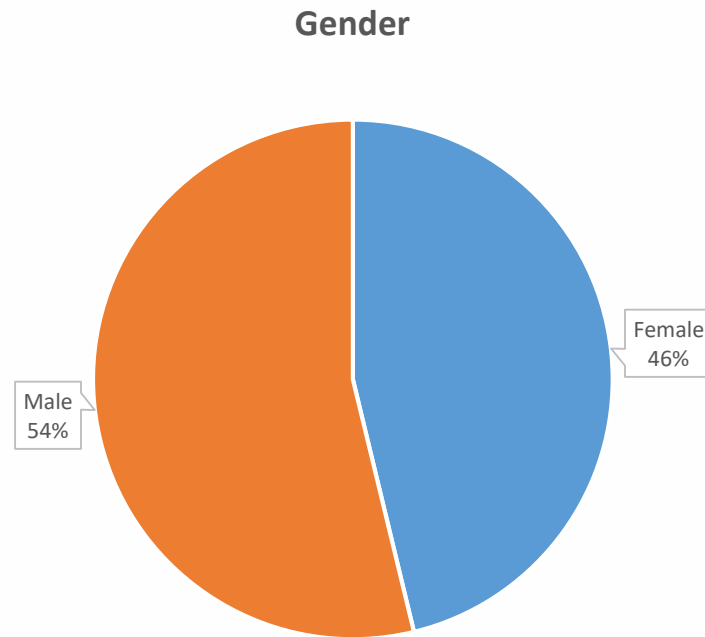
- This summer I met with my DVR Counselor. He took a moment to stop and say, “This is hard work. Being in school while sick is not easy. You’re a caregiver. You’ve hung in there and haven’t given up. You’re not done yet. You are succeeding and let’s take a moment to cheer you on!” And it was said with respect and sincerity.
- DVR has kept in contact with me. I’ve never felt like we were out of touch. I appreciate the predictability of service. Always keeping the lines of communication open in-between meetings is very nice too. I have had a great experience with my RT too. Everyone has been fabulous.
- Now that I’m used to the video set up, it’s much easier for me. I don’t have to drive anywhere. We looked at temporary jobs, teleworking jobs. COVID expanded the job search options. This really helps me because I have social anxiety.

Negative

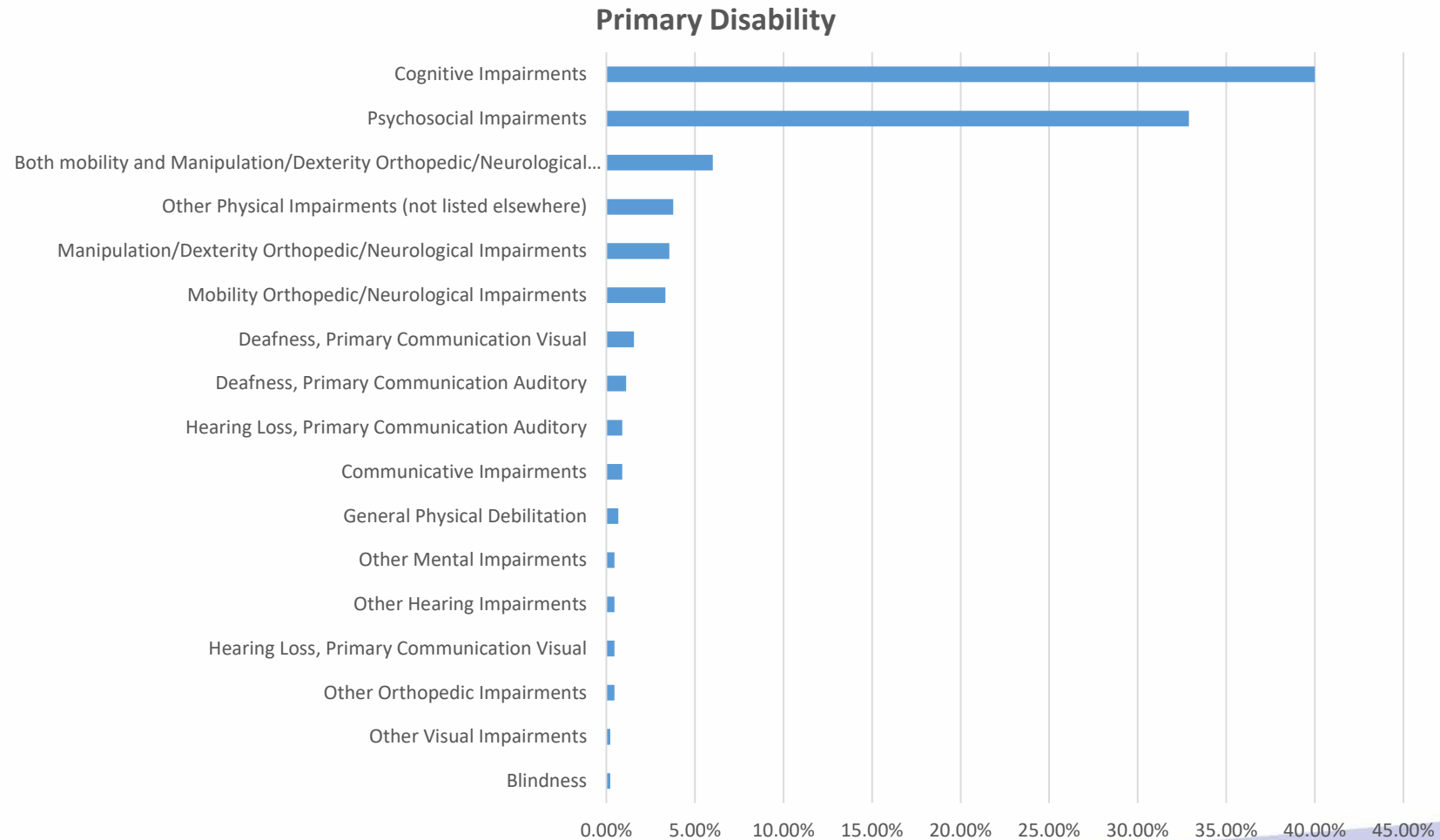
- They were OK, sometimes it’s difficult because the communication is not good via zoom or email. Some things would have been easier in-person. It took a little bit longer.
- Some of the barriers they have so many on their caseloads and they’re swamped and it may take more than 48 hrs. to get back with me. If they had more help that would help. My DVR counselor’s helper should help me more often. I wished that someone else could have helped me, because then I could have submitted paperwork faster.

Bellingham Office Demographics

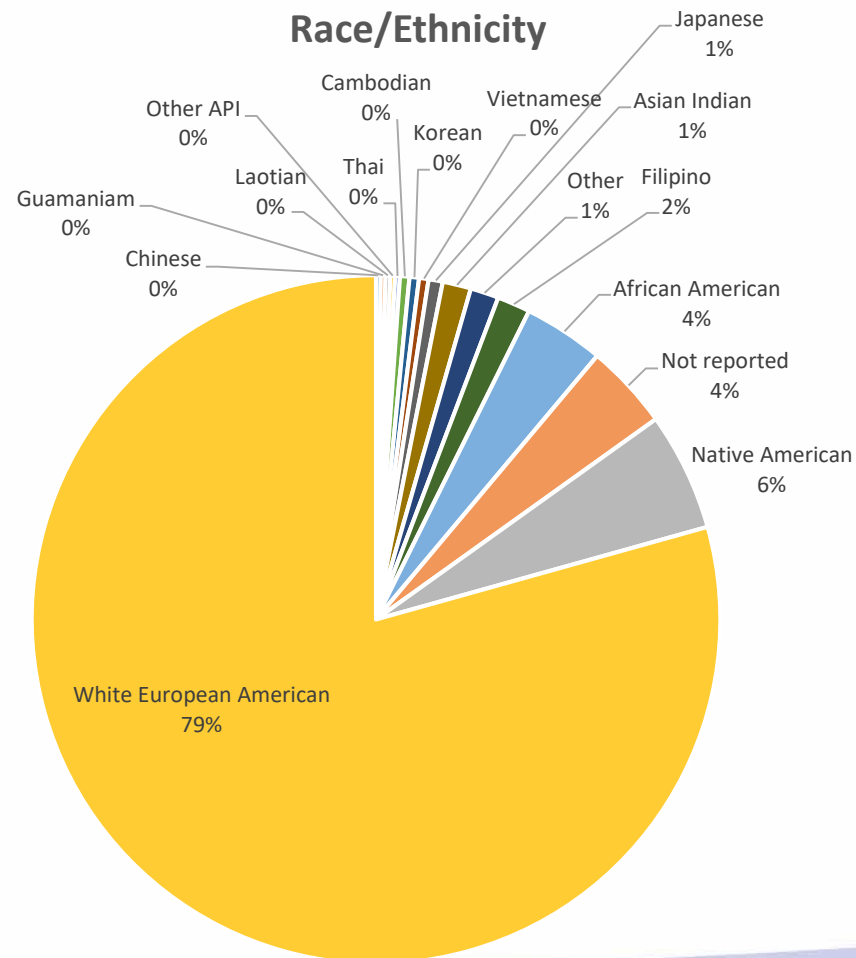
Total Open Cases as of August 2021 - 450



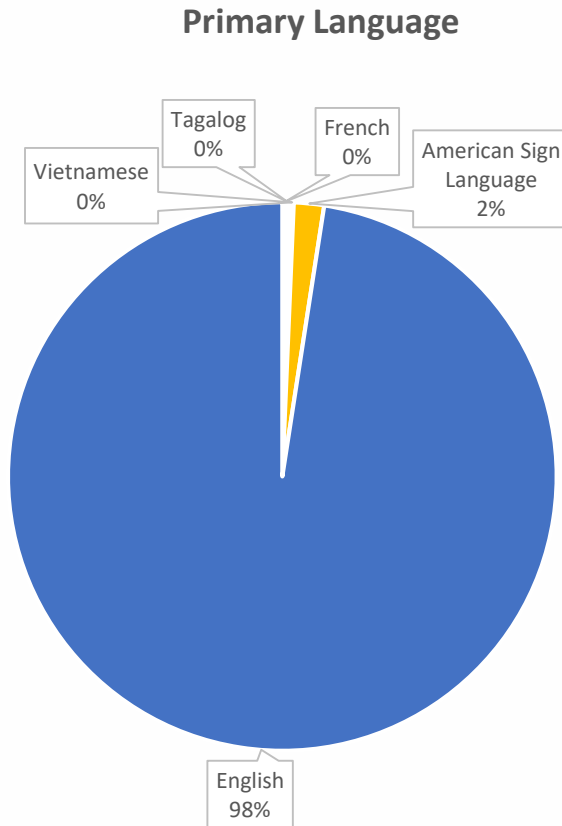
Bellingham Office Demographics



Bellingham Office Demographics



Bellingham Office Demographics



CSPE Next Steps

- Implementation of next contract with Washington State University – Social & Economic Sciences Research Center for Customer Satisfaction Survey
 - Improved reporting
 - Trends over time
 - Comment analysis

Abstract geometric lines in black on a white background, forming various overlapping polygons and shapes, primarily concentrated on the left side of the slide.

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Jen Bean

November 2021

UPDATES

Office Closure

CAP Board

New CAP Staff

DOUG BURKHALTER

- VRC Lynnwood Office
- 20+ years DVR
- Past experience:
 - RT
 - Business Specialist
- Training experience
- Starts Dec. 1st

Overall great guy!



SECRET SHOPPER PROCESS

- Googled DVR + city name to get contact info, which directed them to the DVR office locator page with the office contact info
- Made one phone call and left a message if no one answered
- If they talked with someone, they asked about the DVR process, waitlist and how to apply for services. Voicemails included a request to learn more about the program.
- **Good/Excellent:** Calls were answered/returned, and answers to questions about DVR were thorough and accurate.
- **Limited:** Questions were not answered thoroughly or accurately

RESULTS

Region 1

- 8 offices
- 7 scored good/excellent
- All offices responded

Region 2

- 9 offices
 - 3 good/excellent
 - 2 offices did not respond

Region 3

- 8 offices
 - 2 good/excellent
 - 3 offices did not respond
 - 1 office had wrong phone number listed, could not leave a message

ISSUES & INSIGHTS

Of the 6 offices who did not respond:

- 1 office phones were down for 2 weeks, call happened during that time. They lost 16 voicemails
- 2 office phone numbers were listed incorrectly on the DSHS page
- 2 smaller offices are in old buildings with outdated phone systems that cannot be forwarded or have the voicemails checked remotely

BEST PRACTICES

Region 1

- Pair new VRC with experienced VRC for mentoring, “buddy”
- PS3 checks phone numbers quarterly
- VRS randomly calls customers to check in on how process with DVR is going
- VRS sets clear expectations around customer service being #1 focus
- ⑩ Hiring
- ⑩ Check ins and unit meetings

Region 2

- RA welcome email to new staff, video about disability rights and disability movement
- Training staff that “counseling” starts at first contact
- Explain the DVR process and timelines for each phase
- Hosting “virtual open house” for community partners

Region 3*

- Haven’t had discussion of best practices yet but concern shared that correcting office and staff contact information is done by different people, Regional support staff vs. IT Helpdesk.
- Process is confusing, staff need reminders



Quarterly Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, November 3rd, 2021
 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

[Click here to join Zoom meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 891 5912 8714

Passcode: 507214

Dial-in Alternative: 253-215-8782

TIME	PRESENTER	AGENDA	DOCUMENT REFERENCE
8:50	Shelby & Jolie	Sign into Zoom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to login early and troubleshoot connectivity issues so meeting can get started promptly at 9:00am 	
9:00	Peggy Frisk	Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome 	
9:05	Terry Redmon	DVR Update	
10:05		BREAK	
10:20	Ann Martin Catherine Herring	Region 2 Bellingham Unit Update	
11:15	Peggy Frisk	Public Comment	
11:30	Peggy Frisk	Meeting Wrap up	
12:00	Peggy Frisk	ADJOURN	



Transforming
Lives

DVR Director Update

Presented by: Terry Redmon

November 2021



DVR Director Updates: Topics

- Budget update
- Pre-ETS update
- Performance measures
 - Pre and post COVID
 - DVR Measures that Matter
- Order of Selection updates

Budget Update

- We have fully matched our 2021 Basic Support Grant. This allows us to carryforward our Basic Support Grant for another year.
- We've received \$1,683,377 of Program Income in SFY 22
 - This is only slightly less than last year at this time
- Our expenditures have increased from the past state fiscal year.
 - SFY 21 Average Monthly expenditures were \$4,710,000
 - SFY 22 Average Monthly expenditures are \$4,955,000

Transition

45

Staff Update

- Welcome to 2 New Regional Transition Consultants
 - Stacy Kidd
 - ESD 121 (Pierce County)
 - Selena Cunningham
 - ESD 112 (Vancouver)
- Added a Transition Benefits Specialist
- Hiring a Transition Administrative Assistant (starting in November)

Training

- MEGI
 - RTCs have started year 2 of Motivational Enhancement Group Intervention Training

Projects

- Washington State University
 - Transition Self Assessment Tool (TSAT) to be executed in January 2022
 - Expanded collection to include private school, tribal schools, and juvenile rehabilitation sites
 - Washington Demonstration Project
 - 4 pilot schools sites confirmed

Goal to have 18 dedicated Transition Staff by January 2022

WSU/ DVR Transition Pilot Schools:

Eastern Washington

- Colville
- Goldendale

Western Washington

- Mercer Island
- Sultan

Performance Pre- and Post-COVID

For the most recent quarter (Jul-Sep 2021):

- Customers actively seeking jobs returned to pre-COVID levels. Numbers of cases In Plan and New Plans were similar to pre-COVID levels. In Plan-Employed well exceeded the monthly average before COVID.
- Applications and eligibility determinations remained low, at about half their pre-COVID levels.
- The Rehab Rate rose to a monthly average of 46% for the quarter and 50% in September. The number Closed Rehab in Sep. (140) was close to pre-COVID numbers (151/month).
- Average days to plan dropped to 103 days, lower than the pre-COVID average of 112 days.
- Total Case Service Expenditures reached 94% of pre-COVID levels and In-Plan expenditures were nearly equivalent to pre-COVID levels.

CASE VOLUME MONTHLY AVERAGES

Pre- COVID Jul 2019-Mar 2020	Post-COVID Apr 2020-past month	Change	Most recent quarter
5,639 In Plan	5,533 In Plan	-2%	5,652 In Plan
756 In Plan Employed	620 In Plan-Employed	-18%	892 In Plan-Employed
530 New Applications	220 New Applications	-58%	275 New Applications
535 New Eligibilities	220 New Eligibilities	-59%	264 New Eligibilities
246 New Plans	203 New Plans	-17%	251 New Plans
548 Case Closures	480 Case Closures	-13%	589 Case Closures
286 Closed after Plan	197 Closed after Plan	-31%	236 Closed after Plan
151 Closed Rehab	85 Closed Rehab	-44%	108 Closed Rehab

PERFORMANCE

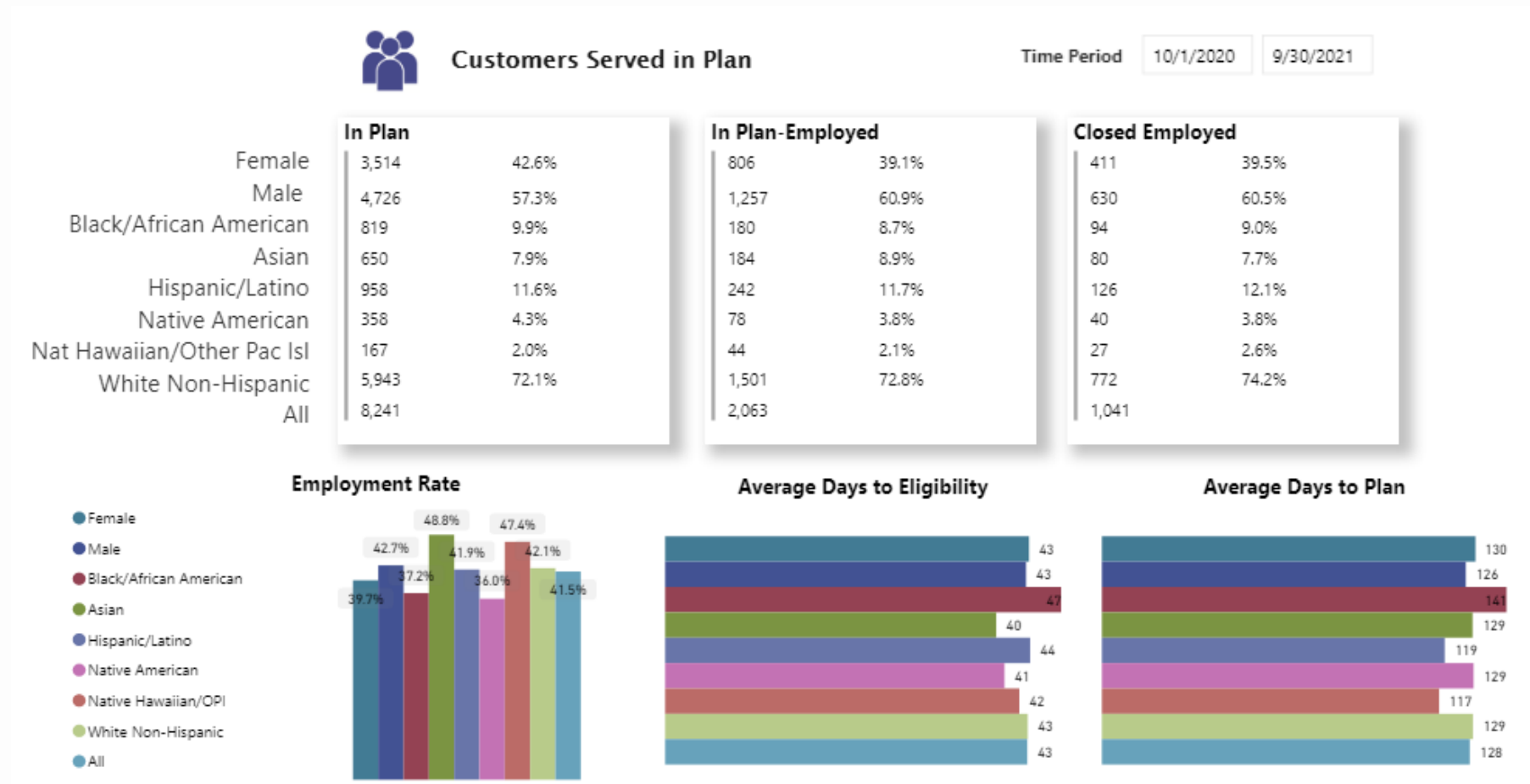
52.6% Rehab Rate	42.9% Rehab Rate	-9.7%	46.0% Rehab Rate
42 Ave Days to Eligibility	44 Ave Days to Eligibility	2	46 Ave Days to Eligibility
112 Ave Days to Plan	128 Ave Days to Plan	16	103 Ave Days to Plan

CASE SERVICE EXPENDITURES

\$1,340,897 In Plan	\$836,993 In Plan	-31%	\$1,322,764 In Plan
\$1,501,781 Total	\$903,757 Total	-34%	\$1,409,567 Total

DVR Measures that Matter

- Staff has been introduced to key performance measures, with data presented by gender, race and ethnicity.
- Goal is to build awareness, draw attention to persistent differences, and improve EDI in service to our customers.
- Reports will be updated monthly with additional measures in subsequent reports.



Order of Selection Updates

- 205 SD-P3 cases were released on October 1.
- 1,347 customers remained on the waiting list as of October 1.
- To maintain manageable caseloads in offices impacted by releases, no cases will be released in November.

Priority Category	Number	Application Date Range
SD-P3	443	01/29/2020– 09/10/2021
SD-P4	591	08/11/2017 – 09/15/2021
NSD	313	02/01/2017 – 08/19/2021
Total	1,347	

Region 2 Update

Presented by: Ann Martin, Megan Grundbrecher and Catherine Herring

Bellingham Unit Update

Presented by: Catherine Herring

November 2021

Region 2 Updates

It's been quite a year!

➤ Challenges

- Adapting to remote service delivery
- Electronic Management System (EDMS)
- Overall recruiting and retaining qualified staff
- Now returning to the office

Region 2

WHAT IS WORKING

- Pre-Employment Transition Services(Pre-ETS)
- Training
- Enhanced recruiting efforts
- Focus on staff retention

Region 2

Pre-Employment Transition Services

- Outreach/Coordination
- Direct Delivery Services
- Contracted services
- Successes across the community

Bellingham Unit Topics:

- Student Transition Services
- Business relationships and support services to customers
- WorkSource partner relationships & communication
- Training new staff remotely
- Hiring new VRC with ASL as first-language



Washington State **Rehabilitation Council**

Customer Listening Session Summary

From: [Satko, Shelby M. \(DSHS/WSRC\)](#)
To: [Terry Redmon; Goard, Allesandria C. \(DSHS/DVR\) \(allesandria.goard@dshs.wa.gov\); Ann Martin \(DSHS/DVR\) \(MARTIA@dshs.wa.gov\); Herring, Catherine \(DSHS/OOS/DVR\) \(catherine.herring@dshs.wa.gov\)](#)
Cc: [Zawisza, Kristina \(DSHS/DVR\); Alveshere, Donald J. \(DSHS/OOS/DVR\) \(donald.alveshere@dshs.wa.gov\); Deborah Tigerson \(DSHS/DVR\) \(tigerdr@dshs.wa.gov\); Villegas, Cassi L. \(DSHS/OOS/DVR\) \(cassi.villegas@dshs.wa.gov\); Mari Heusman \(mari.heusman@dshs.wa.gov\); Jen Bean CAP](#)
Subject: WSRC Customer Listening Sessions Summary - Bellingham - October 2021
Date: Thursday, October 21, 2021 4:20:22 PM

Greetings Terry, Allesandria, Ann & Catherine,

In preparation for the November 2021 Quarterly Meeting, the WSRC held Customer Listening Sessions with customers in the Bellingham office. Due to COVID, each listening session took place in a virtual meeting format that included a customer, 1-2 council members and WSRC staff. The focus of these listening sessions was to obtain customer feedback about DVR's service provision during the COVID pandemic, timeliness of services, and overall satisfaction. We confirmed 7 customers and 7 attended. Customers were in the following case status categories:

- Eligibility - 2
- Plan – 5

Reported race/ethnicity:

- African American - 1
- Native American - 1
- White - 4
- Other – 1

The following questions were asked of the DVR Customers:

1. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate DVR's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and providing services remotely?
 - Tell us why you chose that number.
 - Is communication meeting your needs?
 - How well are remote services working for you?
 - Are there aspects you would like to keep moving forward?
2. Are there any barriers you have to receiving services during COVID-19 and throughout your DVR experience?
3. DVR has phases of service: eligibility, plan and closed. What phase are you currently in?
 - How well did your counselor explain it?
4. Have you been referred to a Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP)?
 - Do you understand the role of the CRP?
 - How well did the counselor explain it to you?
5. What has DVR done well?
6. How would you describe your overall satisfaction with DVR?
7. Is there anything else you would like DVR to hear?

Average Rating for services during pandemic: 4.3 out of 5

General Themes

- Faced with the pandemic altering our way of conducting business, customers noted how much they appreciate DVR's willingness to adjust and adapt to new ways of helping them.
- Communication with customers is timely and consistent, and counselors try to use communication methods that are best for each customer.
- Overall, counselors and rehab techs do a good job at explaining the process of working with DVR to customers. Two of the seven customers interviewed were not sure what phase of service they are currently in.

Virtual Meeting Preferences

- It took some time in the beginning of the pandemic to become effective, but it seems better managed and effective now.
- Overall feedback was mixed; some customers do *not* prefer meetings over Zoom, while others find it to be more convenient. There are pros and cons to both in-person and virtual meetings. Providing a virtual option to some customers would help alleviate transportation issues, saves gas and drive time. Others prefer in-person appointments and expressed how submitting paperwork in-person is quicker and easier for them.

Communication

- Communication has been excellent, and most expressed a very positive working relationship with DVR staff
- DVR staff worked to accommodate customers' preferences of communication method.
- A customer reported that reading printed/hard-copy documents is easier for them, and digital versions are harder for them to read.
- For some, virtual meetings are easier to attend than in-person, as virtual meetings reduce their social anxiety.
- DVR counselor arranged for customer to have an ASL interpreter at their interviews held via Zoom.
- A customer expressed that using email as the primary method of communication does *not* work for them, and they do not fully understand everything that is sent to them.
- At times, communication was inhibited by technology glitches, outages, and other issues. Customers reported their documents not being received by DVR staff due to these issues. If they had been able to go to the office and fill out/submit the forms in-person, the process would have been faster.

What has DVR done well?

- Increases customers' exposure to potential employers in the job market
- DVR staff helped their customers learn how to use zoom and other virtual platforms, technologies, and devices to attend job interviews, classes, and submit paperwork virtually, since offices were closed.
- Motivates and supports customers in their pursuit for employment and continuing education/ job skill training
- Overall, customers report feeling supported by their counselor, that the counselor and other DVR staff are compassionate and genuinely care about them, and that they are aware of their personal/unique needs and challenges.

- Helps customers create occupational and educational goals, and creating a plan to meet their goals
- Keeps the line of communication open with customer in-between scheduled appointments to ask questions
- Providing resources and new avenues of job searching

Suggestions for Improvement

- Customer noted that the DVR counselor was distracted working from home. Although the customer expressed their understanding and empathy with teleworking, they felt that the counselor was hard to reach at times and when they did connect, the counselor seemed distracted.
- In the first several months of the pandemic, the lending library for assistive equipment was not available. Customers were unable to go to the DVR office to pick them up and shipping was problematic.
- “Would benefit with training to help understand ALL their clientele have financial, health, caregiving challenges, and unknown numbers of unseen stressors that challenge us on a daily basis. If the client is on Federal disability, that is a system designed to keep people in poverty. That is really important to understand. So many people did not start out in poverty. They were disabled later in life, i.e. In-depth training to help staff understand this so they can understand what their clients are going through would help greatly. Everyone should have a course on bridges out of poverty.”

WSRC Council Member Analysis and Suggestions

- Overall positive feedback is a good reflection on the cohesion and management of the Bellingham office.
- Continuity makes a huge difference. The Bellingham office has less staff turnover, and this is reflective in the customers’ comments, that they have had the same committed Counselor throughout the duration of their time with DVR.
- Some customers are feeling the impact of staff workload. While we know that caseload sizes are actually smaller right now (at the time of this writing), customers made comments that their counselors have big caseloads or are overworked. Time spent in trainings, empathy fatigue, work/life challenges, overall COVID burnout may all be affecting service delivery; or at least the perception thereof.

Jen Bean, Chair of the Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation subcommittee, will review highlights of listening sessions during the next WSRC quarterly meeting on Tuesday, November 2nd.

The Council appreciates DVR’s support for and attention to customer feedback and leadership’s commitment to reviewing these summaries. By working together, DVR customers are heard.

Please let us know if you have any questions or if we can provide further information.

[Make it a great day!](#)

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
(M) 360-764-0728 | Shelby.Satko@dshs.wa.gov | www.wsrcwa.org

Transforming Lives

Notice: This message and any attached file(s) contains information which may be confidential. Unless you are the intended addressee (or authorized to receive for the intended addressee), you may not use, copy or disclose to anyone the message or any information contained in the message. If you have received the message in error, please notify the sender immediately and then delete it.

2022 Meeting Schedule

February 10-11, 2022: Olympia

May 12-13, 2022: Kelso/Longview

August 11-12, 2022: Moses Lake

November 3-4, 2022: Central Seattle





Washington State
Rehabilitation Council

WSRC/DVR Acronyms

WSRC Commonly Used Acronyms

ACS: American Community Survey (from the Census Bureau)

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

AJC: American Job Center

ALTSA: Aging and Long Term Support Administration

ASL: American Sign Language

AT: Assistive Technology

BASC: Barriers and Accessibility Solutions Committee

BHA: Behavioral Health Administration

BLS: Bureau of Labor Statistics (Census of Employment and Wages)

BMMP: Business Management Modernization Project

CAP: Client Assistance Program

CARF: Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities

CART: Computer-assisted real-time Translation

CCER: Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

CIL: Center for Independent Living

CMS: Case Management System

CRP: Community Rehabilitation Provider

CP: Cerebral Palsy

CRC: Certified Rehabilitation Counselor

CSNA: Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

DD: Developmental Disability

DDA: Developmental Disability Administration

DES: Department of Enterprise Services

DSB: Department of Services for the Blind

DSE or DSU: Designated State Entity or Designated State Unit

DVR: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

EDI: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

ESD: Educational Service District, also, Employment Security Department

FCS: Functional Community Supports

FFY: Federal Fiscal Year

ID: Intellectual Disability

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP: Individual Education Plan

IL: Independent Living

IRI: Institute on Rehabilitation Issues

JLARC: Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (Report on Employment and Community Inclusion Services for People with Developmental Disabilities)

LRE: Least Restrictive Environment

LTS: Long Term Support

MH: Mental Health

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

OFM: Office of Financial Management

OJT: On-the-job Training

OSERS: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services

OOS: Order of Selection

One-Stop: WorkSource Center

OSPI: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

PAVE: Partnership for Actions Voices for Empowerment (Parent Advocacy)

RCW: Revised Code of Washington

RDA: Research and Data Analysis (research division of DSHS)

Region 10: Federal Region of Washington, per RSA

RFP/RFQ: Request for Proposal/Qualifications

RSA: Rehabilitation Services Administration

SILC: State Independent Living Council

SIPP: Survey of Income and Program Participation (Census Bureau)

SPIL: State Plan for independent living

SME: Subject Matter Expert

SSA: Social Security Administration

SSDI: Social Security Disability Insurance

SSI: Supplemental Security Income

TAP: Talent and Prosperity for All Plan

TBI: Traumatic Brain Injury

Title 4: of WIOA is the Rehabilitation Act,

Title 1: under Title 4, which authorizes DVR services and funds

Section 105 of Title 1: authorizes State Rehabilitation Councils

UI: Unemployment Insurance

VR: Vocational Rehabilitation

VRC: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

WAC – Washington Administrative Code

WATAP: Washington Technical Assistance Program

WIOA: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
 WISE: Washington Initiative for Supported Employment
 WOTC: Work Opportunity Tax Credit
 WTECB: Workforce Training, Education, and Coordination Board
 WSRC: Washington State Rehabilitation Council
 WDC: Workforce Development Council
 WOTC: Work Opportunity Tax Credit

WA DVR

AFP: Authorization for Purchase
 CBA: Community Based Assessment
 JD: Job Development
 ELT: Executive Leadership Team
 IPE: Individual Plan for Employment
 IRWE: Impairment Related Work Expense
 ITS: Intensive Training Services
 MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
 MSD: Most Significantly Disabled
 NEO: New Employee Orientation
 Pass Plan: Plan to achieve self-support
 Pre-ETS: Pre-Employment Services
 PES: Post-Employment Services
 PHI: Protected Health Information
 RA: Regional Administrator or Re
 RCD – Rehab Counselors for the Deaf
Region 1: East of the Cascades
Region 2: King County north
Region 3: Pierce County south and all of the peninsula
 ROI: Release of Information
 RT: Rehabilitation Tech
 SDOP: Service Delivery Outcome Plan
 SDOR: Service Delivery Outcome Report
 SE: Supported Employment
 SO: State Office – DVR Headquarters
 SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
 STARS: DVRs customer database
 TWE: Trial Work Experience
 121 Program: Tribal Rehabilitation Program (Federal designation)
 701 Program: Tribal Rehabilitation Program (WA State designation)