

**STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM  
AND  
STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM**

**STATE: ARKANSAS**

**AGENCY: ARKANSAS REHABILITATION SERVICES**

**AGENCY TYPE: GENERAL X BLIND \_\_\_\_\_ COMBINED \_\_\_\_\_**

**SECTION 1: STATE CERTIFICATIONS**

- 1.1** The Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (name of designated state agency or designated state unit) is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended<sup>1</sup> and its supplement under Title VI, Part B of the Act.
- 1.2** As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (name of the designated state agency)<sup>3</sup> agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan<sup>4</sup>, the Act, and all applicable regulations<sup>5</sup>, policies, and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.
- 1.3** As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B of the Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan<sup>6</sup>, the Act, and all applicable regulations<sup>7</sup>, policies, and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan.
- 1.4** The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement.
- 1.5** The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement.
- 1.6** All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law.
- 1.7** The Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (title of state officer) has the authority under state law to receive, hold, and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement.

1.8 The Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (title of state officer) has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.

1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

June 6, 2007

(Date)

Robert P. Treviño

(Typed Name of Signatory)

Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

(Title)

1 Public Law 93-112, as amended by Public Laws 93-516, 95-602, 98-221, 99-506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.

2 Unless otherwise stated, "Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

3 All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

4 No funds under Title I of the Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Act and 34 CFR part 361.

5 Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.

6 No funds under Title VI, Part B of the Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Act.

7 Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

**SECTION 2: PUBLIC COMMENT ON STATE PLAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES****2.1 Public participation requirements.** (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))**(a) Conduct of public meetings.**

The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.

**(b) Notice requirements.**

The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings, or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council.

**(c) Special consultation requirements.**

The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council, and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

**SECTION 3: SUBMISSION OF THE STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT**

- 3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement.** (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)
- (a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Act.
  - (b) The state submits only those policies, procedures, or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.
  - (c) The state submits to the commissioner at such time and in such manner as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:
    - (1) Comprehensive system of personnel development;
    - (2) Assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
    - (3) Innovation and expansion activities; and
    - (4) Other updates of information required under Title I, Part B or Title VI, Part B of the Act that are requested by the commissioner.
  - (d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Act, 34 CFR 361, or 34 CFR 363.
- 3.2 Supported employment State plan supplement.** (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)
- (a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B of Title VI of the Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B of Title I of the Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.
  - (b) The supported employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

**SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE PLAN****4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit.** (Section 101(a)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))**(a) Designated state agency.**

- (1) There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.
- (2) The designated state agency is:
  - (A) X a state agency that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities; or
  - (B) \_\_\_\_\_ a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.
- (3) In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

**(b) Designated state unit.**

- (1) If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division, or unit that:
  - (A) Is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
  - (B) Has a full-time director;
  - (C) Has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
  - (D) Is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.
- (2) The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

**4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council.** (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

(a) \_\_\_ The designated state agency is an independent state commission that:

- (1) Is responsible under state law for operating, or overseeing the operation of, the vocational rehabilitation program in the state and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
- (2) Is consumer-controlled by persons who:
  - (A) Are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
  - (B) Represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated state unit under the direction of the commission is the state agency for individuals who are blind;
- (3) Includes family members, advocates, or other representatives of individuals with mental impairments; and
- (4) Undertakes the functions set forth in Section 105(c)(4) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4).

or

(b) X The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17 and the designated state unit:

- (1) Jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council develops, agrees to, and reviews annually state goals and priorities, and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress, in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Act, 34 CFR 361.29, and subsection 4.11 of this State Plan;
- (2) Regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation, and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3) Includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan, a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the Council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the Council, and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and
- (4) Transmits to the Council:
  - (A) All plans, reports, and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner;

- (B) All policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement; and
- (C) Copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential.

(c) *If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c)* provides a summary of the input provided by the Council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

**4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan.** (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.21)

The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

- (a) Individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services, or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;
- (b) Personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- (c) Providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- (d) The director of the Client Assistance Program; and
- (e) The State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a Council.

**4.4 Nonfederal share.** (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state, or if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.

**4.5 Local administration.** (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15)

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. Yes \_\_\_ No X

If "Yes", the designated state agency:

- (a) Ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and

- (b) Develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program, in accordance with the State Plan.

**4.6 Shared funding and administration of joint programs.** (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. **Yes** \_\_\_ **No** **X**  
**If "Yes"**, the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

- (a) A description of the nature and scope of the joint program;
- (b) The services to be provided under the joint program;
- (c) The respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and
- (d) The share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

**4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness.** (Section 101(a)(4) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

- (a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.
- (b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:
  - (1) Nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization, or individual;
  - (2) Services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and
  - (3) State, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in **Attachment 4.7(b)(3)** a waiver of the statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:
    - (A) Identification of the types of services to be provided;
    - (B) Written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;
    - (C) Written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
    - (D) Written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

- (c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

**4.8 Cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.** (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

- (a) **Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide workforce investment system.**  
The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide workforce investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide workforce investment system.
- (b) **Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.**  
**Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4)** describes the designated state agency's:
  - (1) Cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system;
  - (2) Coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
  - (3) Establishment of cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
  - (4) Efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.
- (c) **Coordination with education officials.**
  - (1) **Attachment 4.8(b)(2)** describes the plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of

educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.

(2) The State Plan description must:

(A) Provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and

(B) Include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:

(i) Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;

(ii) Transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

(iii) Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and

(iv) Procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(d) **Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.**

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(e) **Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.**

(1) There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations.

Yes \_\_\_ No X

(2) If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Act.

- (A) Strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
- (B) Procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
- (C) Provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

**4.9 Methods of administration.** (Section 101(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and, .51(a) and (b))

(a) **In general.**

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the Plan and 34 CFR 361.

(b) **Employment of individuals with disabilities.**

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B of Title I of the Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Act.

(c) **Facilities.**

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations implementing these laws.

**4.10 Comprehensive system of personnel development.** (Section 101(a)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

**Attachment 4.10** describes the designated state agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified state rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated state unit. The description includes the following:

(a) **Data system on personnel and personnel development.**

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

(1) **Qualified personnel needs.**

- (A) The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
  - (B) The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
  - (C) Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.
- (2) **Personnel development.**
- (A) A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
  - (B) The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
  - (C) The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.
- (b) **Plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel.**  
Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.
- (c) **Personnel standards.**  
Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:
- (1) Standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or,  
in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.

- (2) To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.
- (3) The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:
- (A) Specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
  - (B) The specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);
  - (C) Procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and
  - (D) The identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) **Staff development.**

Policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

- (1) A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology.
- (2) Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) **Personnel to address individual communication needs.**

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) **Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**

Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

**4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports.** (Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

**(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.**

**(1) Attachment 4.11(a)** documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every 3 years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a Council). The assessment describes:

**(A)** The rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- (i)** Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- (ii)** Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and
- (iii)** Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

**(B)** The need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

**(2)** For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

**(b) Annual estimates.**

**Attachment 4.11(b)** identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

- (1)** Number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the Plan;
- (2)** Number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
- (3)** Costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

**(c) Goals and priorities.**

**(1) Attachment 4.11(c)(1)** identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

- (2) The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.
  - (3) **Order of selection.**  
If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, **Attachment 4.11(c)(3):**
    - (A) Shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
    - (B) Provides a justification for the order; and
    - (C) Identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
  - (4) **Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.**  
**Attachment 4.11(c)(4)** specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.
- (d) **Strategies.**
- (1) **Attachment 4.11(d)** describes the strategies, including:
    - (A) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;
    - (B) Outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
    - (C) As applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs;
    - (D) Strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Act; and
    - (E) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
  - (2) **Attachment 4.11 (d)** describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:
    - (A) Address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);

- (B) Support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the Plan; and
  - (C) Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.
- (e) **Evaluation and reports of progress.**
- (1) The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a Council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.
  - (2) **Attachment 4.11(e)(2):**
    - (A) Provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in **Attachment 4.11(c)(1)** and, if applicable, **Attachment 4.11(c)(3)** were achieved;
    - (B) Identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;
    - (C) Describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;
    - (D) Assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Act; and
    - (E) Provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

**4.12 Innovation and expansion.** (Section 101(a)(18) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

- (a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Act for the:
  - (1) Development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in **Attachment 4.11(a)** and goals and priorities of the state identified in **Attachments 4.11(c)(1)** and, if applicable, **Attachment 4.11(c)(3)**; and
  - (2) Support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).
- (b) **Attachment 4.11 (d)** describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.

(c) **Attachment 4.11(e)(2)** describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

**4.13 Reports.** (Section 101(a)(10) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

- (a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.
- (b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

**SECTION 5: ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES****5.1 Information and referral services.** (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services, if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system in the state.

**5.2 Residency.** (Section 101(a)(12) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

**5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services.** (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

- (a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section 103(a) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services.

Yes  No

(b) **If "No":**

- (1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
- (2) **Attachment 4.11(c)(3):**
  - (A) Shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
  - (B) Provides a justification for the order of selection; and
  - (C) Identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- (3) Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

**5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits.** (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

- (a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual, or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.
- (b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:
- (1) Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
  - (2) Counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Act;
  - (3) Referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;
  - (4) Job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
  - (5) Rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices; and

- (6) Post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.
- (c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:
  - (1) Progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
  - (2) An immediate job placement; or
  - (3) Provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.
- (d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide workforce investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

**5.5 Individualized plan for employment.** (Section 101(a)(9) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

- (a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, an individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.
- (b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

**5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers.** (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals, or, as appropriate, their representatives, are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

**5.7 Services to American Indians.** (Section 101(a)(13) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

**5.8 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938.** (Section 101(a)(14) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

- (a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:
  - (1) Who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or
  - (2) Whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.
- (b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for 2 years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative), to determine the interests, priorities, and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.
- (c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations, and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.
- (d) The individual with a disability, or, if appropriate, the individual's representative, has input into the review and reevaluation, and through signed acknowledgement attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

**5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities.** (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:

- (a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Act for that fiscal year.
- (b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.

- (c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services, other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

**5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements.** (Section 101(a)(24) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

**(a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.**

The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than non-profit agencies and organizations.

**(b) Cooperative agreements with private non-profit organizations.**

**Attachment 4.8(b)(3)** describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

**STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM****SECTION 6: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

- 6.1 Designated state agency.** (Section 625(b)(1) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))  
The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B of the Act.
- 6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs.** (Section 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))  
**Attachment 4.11(a)** describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.
- 6.3 Quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services.** (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))  
**Attachment 6.3** describes the quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private non-profit organizations, or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.
- 6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.** (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)  
**Attachment 4.11(c)(4)** identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Act.
- 6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services.** (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))  
**Attachment 4.8(b)(4)** describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.
- 6.6 Minority outreach.** (34 CFR 363.11(f))

**Attachment 4.11(d)** includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

- 6.7 Reports.** (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)  
The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Act.

**SECTION 7: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

- 7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs.** (Section 625(b)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))  
The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.
- 7.2 Use of funds in providing services.** (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))
- (a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B of the Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.
  - (b) Funds provided under Title VI, Part B are used only to supplement, and not supplant, the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.
  - (c) Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Act.

**SECTION 8: PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

- 8.1 Scope of supported employment services.** (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))
- (a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).
  - (b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.
  - (c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- 8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities.** (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))
- The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Act and funded under Title I of the Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.
- 8.3 Individualized plan for employment.** (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))
- (a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.
  - (b) The individualized plan for employment:
    - (1) Specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
    - (2) Describes the expected extended services needed; and
    - (3) Identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.
  - (c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

**Attachment 4.2(c): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations**

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) partners with ARS by reviewing, collaborating and providing input and recommendations to the VR State Plan, all ARS policies and procedures through the SRC Policy and State Plan Committee (Committee). The goals of the Committee are to review and provide input to ARS state plan; collaborate with ARS on state needs assessments; and to review and provide input on ARS policies for services.

The Deputy Commissioner for Field Operations provided a draft copy of the State Plan Update to the SRC Committee. The SRC reviewed and approved the Plan with no additions or recommendations.

The SRC recommends that ARS request additional funding for Title I through the reallocation process. Other SRC goals and recommendations are to enhance communication with state and federal legislatures; for the SRC to participate in the Arkansas Workforce One-Stop Centers to improve accessibility; and to explore community outreach projects to learn needs of people with disabilities.

Response of ARS to SRC recommendations is made through the process of committee responses to their respective activities. This is an ongoing process that involves collaboration and cooperation between ARS and the SRC. There were no instances of rejection by ARS of input or recommendations by the SRC.

A Consumer Satisfaction Survey was completed for the SRC through a contractor. The survey indicates that 97.6% of the clients surveyed rated their satisfaction as *good* or *higher* after the completion of their rehabilitation program. Results from the survey showed that 86.6% of the clients rated satisfaction with services as *good* or *above* and 91.5% rated communication with their counselor as *good* or *higher*.

## **Attachment 4.8(b): Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities**

### **(1) Cooperation with Agencies that Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities**

#### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS collaborates and coordinates services with federal, state and local agencies that contribute to the vocational rehabilitation and independent living of Arkansans with disabilities. ARS cooperates with agencies in carrying out activities such as planning and coordinating services to people with disabilities to build capacity in communities, improve the quality and quantity of services and avoid duplication of services. Agencies that ARS collaborates and coordinates services with include:

- Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
- Arkansas Department of Higher Education
- Arkansas Department of General Education, Special Education-Transition
- Centers for Independent Living
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- Developmental Disability Providers
- Supported Employment Vendors
- A-Win Project Benefits Planning Project
- Social Security Administration Ticket to Work
- DHS - Division of Aging and Adult Services
- DHS - Working Disabled Medicaid Program
- DHS - Division of Behavioral Health Services
- DHS - Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Spinal Cord Commission
- Alexander Human Development Center Pilot Project

ARS maintains an active presence on numerous councils and committees, including:

- The Arkansas Independent Living Council
- The Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities
- AR Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council
- Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council
- Arkansas Youth Development Collaborative
- Arkansas Transition Taskforce
- Governor's Taskforce on Integrated Services and Supported Housing
- Youth Leadership Forum

ARS does not have any cooperative agreements regarding programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture, or State use contracting programs.

### **(2) Coordination with Education Officials**

#### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS maintains cooperative agreements with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education regarding the continuity of provision of vocational rehabilitation services and access to higher education. ARS maintains interagency agreements with the Arkansas Department of Education - Special Education, regarding transition services to students in public schools. ARS participates in the state level Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP). The AITP is a taskforce made-up of representatives of state agencies including ARS, DHHS-Division of Services for the Blind, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Special Education-Transition, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, DHHS-Division of Mental Health, and parent advocates.

The ARS Policy and Procedures Manual under the Arkansas Transition Program Section, Page B-17 states “The ARS counselor must determine eligibility for services and ensure the development and approval of the IPE by the time the student leaves the school setting.” ARS will revise the Policy Manual to include the wording “or, if ARS is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.”

The current Transition agreement generally provides for this with the wording “The aforementioned parties have a common and concurrent interest in working cooperatively to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to the skill, training and necessary supports to transition success fully from school to the world of work”. ARS is a member of the Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP) that includes the agencies involved in transition in the state. The current transition agreement will be revised to include “Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services”.

ARS is a member of the Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP) that includes the agencies involved in transition in the state. The current transition agreement will be revised to include “Transition planning by personnel by the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs”.

ARS is a member of the Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP) that includes the agencies involved in transition in the state. The current transition agreement will be revised to include “Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services”.

### **(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers**

#### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS has cooperative agreements with Community Rehabilitation Programs throughout the state and a performance based reimbursement system for provided services. ARS has written cooperative agreements with a statewide network of private non-profit agencies

providing supported employment (SE) services and extended services to individuals with the most significant disabilities.

**(4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services**

**ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS has written cooperative agreements with all private non-profit agencies providing supported employment (SE) services and extended services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. All providers of SE services to consumers of ARS have a written agreement on file stating that they will provide extended services for the client as long as the client has the job.

**Attachment 4.8 (c)(2)(B)(iii): Roles and Responsibilities**

The following is an excerpt from the Memorandum of Understanding between ARS and the Arkansas Department of Education, Special Education that delegates the financial responsibility of each agency. Local educational agencies are responsible for Free Appropriate Public Education and Rehabilitation Counselor is responsible for VR services including Transition.

**Memorandum of Understanding**

The parties acknowledge that Special Education has the general supervisory responsibility over the educational program of any public agency program providing a free and public education (FAPE) to individuals with disabilities, ages birth to 21, as defined in state and federal statutes.

**II. Terms**

**Rehabilitation Services:**

- A. Rehabilitation Services has the responsibility for providing diagnosis, vocational counseling, physical restoration, vocational training and job placement to persons with disabilities at no cost to local education agencies. The Rehabilitation Counselor, in conformance with financial and age guidelines, make eligibility determinations.

**Special Education:**

- A. The Special Education Unit will establish and maintain policies and procedures and provide technical assistance to local education agencies to insure that:
  - 1. Individuals with disabilities have been provided with pre-requisite academic, persona adjustment and pre-vocational skill training prior to being referred to Workforce Education.
- C. Special Education will provide state and federal funds to local education agencies for the development of comprehensive special education services to identified children with disabilities.

**Attachment 4.10: Comprehensive System of Personnel Development**

**4.10(a) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development**

**(1) Qualified personnel needs.**

- A. The total number of personnel employed by the agency in the provision of providing vocational rehabilitation service is **135**. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor total number is **88**. The total number of support staff is **47**. Total population served is **20,000**.
- B. The total number of personnel needed by the agency to provide vocational rehabilitation service is **100** VR counselors and **50** support staff members.
- C. The projected total number of personnel needed in the next five years to provide vocation rehabilitation services to a projected population of **25,000** individuals will be **125** VR counselors and **60** support staff members.

**(2) Personnel development.**

- A. The following is a list of higher education institutions that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, Arkansas-Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling; the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling; and, Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling.
- B. The following is the number of students enrolled in the higher education institutions in Arkansas: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville: **11** students, from minority background **5**, with a disability**6**; the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, **210** students (web based), from minority background **40**, with a disability **13**; and Arkansas State University **13** students, from minority background **3**, with a disability **2**.

<b>IHE</b>	<b>Type of Program</b>	<b>Total Students</b>	<b>Disability</b>	<b>Minority</b>
<b>ASU</b>	<b>Masters RC</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>UAF</b>	<b>Masters RC</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>UALR</b>	<b>Masters RC</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>

- C. The following is the number of students who graduated from the higher education institutions in Arkansas: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville with MRC **7**, Certificate **9**; the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, with MRC **52**, Certificate **10**; and Arkansas State University with MRC **10**, Certificate: **0**.

#### **4.10(b) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel**

(1) ARS has received upgrades for support staff positions and continues to use the Career Ladder Incentive Program to help meet future needs. ARS continues to recruit VR counselors based on the Market Labor Rates for the VR Counselor Series. Also during the 2007 Legislative Session, Special Language was provided, indicating a Forgiveness of Student Loan Program. Newly hired VR counselors can be provided up to \$2,000 per year payment to the counselor's student loan creditor. This Special Language along with the Special Entry Rates and Reclassification Study Language will assist the agency in recruiting qualified VR counselors and qualified support staff.

(2) As part of the maintenance of offering a program of development, ARS maintains a list of higher education institutions in the state, which prepare rehabilitation professionals. This listing is maintained by type of program and by category of professional development. ARS also monitors students who enroll in rehabilitation and related programs at each of the institutions and programs by category and the number of students who graduated during the prior year, with and without certification or licensure. The Staff Development sections at ARS and DSB have collaborated to develop and disseminate a formal survey of the higher education institutions to assure timely and accurate data for planning purposes. Both agencies work closely with these institutions to provide internship and practicum opportunities for their students. All Universities are notified when job openings within the agency becomes available.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has implemented the following plan to address the requirements of the CSPD. The initial phase of the plan had focused on rehabilitation counselors. The agency has been working diligently with the Arkansas Legislature, Arkansas Office of Personnel Management and Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration for approval to address the requirements of CSPD to include all Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff. On September 5, 2006, clarification of our CSPD plan was given by the Director of Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration to include all staff training in the ARS Vocational Rehabilitation In-Service Training Program Grant. Also during the 2007 Legislative Session, Special Language was authorized to ARS for a general waiver of the Financial Management Guide on Continuing Professional Education which prohibits state agencies to pay for college training for employees. This waiver allows ARS to provide college level coursework in degree programs for eligible employees selected by the agency. This Special Language will assist the agency in assuring that qualified professional personnel are in place to provide quality rehabilitation services to disabled Arkansans.

#### **Coordination And Facilitation Of Efforts Between The Designated State Unit And Institutions Of Higher Education**

The Human Resources Development Administrator is actively involved on the advisory council for the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. This involvement gives the agency first hand information on students who will be graduating from the MRC programs and where they would be willing to live. The HRD Administrator also presents to the graduating class the employment opportunities with the agency that are forthcoming. All three universities: The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, The University of Arkansas at Little Rock and Arkansas State University are invited to the agency's annual training

conference where the students are treated to an open forum with the agency. The commissioner along with the senior management team discusses the agency progress and job opportunities. A reception is held in their honor where they have the opportunity to talk with VR counselors in the agency to discuss their work situations. All students including minority students are encouraged to join the professional rehabilitation organizations, The National Rehabilitation Association (NRA) and The National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC). The agency actively recruits minorities and students with disabilities at these universities. Three of our professional organizations provide scholarship opportunities to those individuals with disabilities that major in the field of rehabilitation. A scholarship is also provided for minority individuals that major in the field of rehabilitation. During the 2007 Legislative Session, Special Language provided a Forgiveness of Student Loan Program that allows newly hired VR counselors up to \$2,000 per year payment on their student loans to the counselor's student loan creditors. This Special Language along with the Special Entry Rates and Reclassification Study Language assists the agency in recruiting and retaining qualified VR counselors and qualified support staff.

#### **4.10 (c) Personnel Standards**

(1) Because there is no standard established by the State of Arkansas, ARS bases its personnel standards for VR counselors on the degree needed to meet the national CRC requirements through CRCC. CRCC requires a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field, as defined by the CRCC.

(2) ARS currently has 70 out of 88 counselors that meet the national CRC standard. (ARS presently has 4 unfilled counselor positions.) The priority of training and development within CSPD continues to be emphasized for direct service delivery personnel in ARS. ARS presently has 7 counselors involved in distant learning graduate training programs in order to become eligible to sit for CRC exam. ARS has 7 counselors that are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a CSPD program. Of these, 2 is a counselor who has between 16-25 years of career service and 5 are counselors with 25 or more years of service and are eligible to retire. Preference on training is given to the higher priority during the current fiscal year based on availability of training funds.

Priority 1: Counselors with related bachelor's degrees that have completed graduate hours in a rehabilitation-counseling program and/or are currently enrolled or accepted into a program. (7 counselors)

Priority 2. Counselors who have between 16-25 years of career service with the state and are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a learning program.  
(7 counselors)

Priority 3: Counselors who have 25 or more years of career service with the state and are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a learning program.  
(5 counselors)

In all priority categories, counselors who receive educational assistance would be expected to comply with the provisions of the ARS Educational Leave Policy and agree to continue working with the agency for two years for every 9 credit hours completed. When there is not an applicant with the master's degree, ARS will permit the hiring of a bachelors degreed counselor in a Counselor II position with a condition of employment that the person will seek and obtain a masters degree within three years of employment.

(3)(A) The Human Resource Staff Development component of the CSPD team reviews and oversees the current training levels of all personnel in each category. Required standards and evaluation of training needs and timelines are established. The HRD component develops and monitors agency policy and procedure in terms of hiring, training, or retraining personnel to meet standards. This function includes notifying public agencies and all personnel of those steps and timelines.

(B) Effective October 1, 2007 ARS will hire VR counselors in the position classified as Rehabilitation Counselor II and III. VR counselors hired must be classified as Rehabilitation Counselor II or III. Effective September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the classification of Rehabilitation Counselor II, III or Senior Counselor should meet the standard of having a master's degree and either be CRC certified, or eligible to sit for CRC certification. After September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the position classified as Rehabilitation Counselor III or Senior Counselor, who do not meet the standard of having a master's degree and either CRC certification, or eligibility to sit for CRC certification, will be cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II. The counselors who do not meet CSPD requirement and are cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II will be required to have prior approval on cases where paid for services are planned on their IPE. The District Manager or their designee will provide prior approval. Those counselors who do not meet the standards established will be required to continue in the agency's CSPD program that will continue to assist counselors in becoming CRC certified or eligible to sit for CRC certification.

#### **Time Period By Which Existing State Unit Personnel Will Meet The Standards**

ARS has 7 counselors that are not eligible to sit for CRC or involved in a CSPD program. Effective September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the classification of Rehabilitation Counselor II, III or Senior Counselor should meet the standard of having a master's degree and either be CRC certified, or eligible to sit for CRC certification. After September 30, 2007 all ARS employees in the position classified as Rehabilitation Counselor III or Senior Counselor, who do not meet the standard of having a master's degree and either CRC certification, or eligibility to sit for CRC certification, will be cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II. The counselors who do not meet CSPD requirement and are cross-graded in classification to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II will be required to have prior approval on cases where paid for services are planned on their IPE. Counselors under prior approval must have approval under of a qualified rehabilitation counselor in order to:

- Make an eligibility determination.
- Approve an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) and any amendments to the IPE (including no cost services).
- Make the determination, in consultation with the individual, that the record of service of an individual who has achieved an employment outcome can be closed.

(C) Annually all ARS staff receives a personnel performance evaluation from their immediate supervisor. This evaluation is reviewed and signed off by a senior manager in the agency's chain of command. The evaluation packet includes an Individual Training Plan (ITP) that is completed by each employee and signed off by the immediate supervisor. The ITP is placed in each employee personnel file and review annually. This plan indicates what training each employee needs to complete their job duties in line with providing services to our consumers. The annual evaluation report results on each employee are documented and tracked by the agency personnel/human resources section. The personnel/human resources sections also track critical positions within the agency that need to be filled. A report is done annually on hires within the agency and including a breakdown by minority background and employees with disabilities who are hired. VR counselors' progress while in our CSPD program is tracked and reported on, on an annual basis. The Chief of Field Services monitors these reports. He is responsible for making sure established timelines are met within the agency's CSPD plan.

(D) ARS continues to work with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to realign the state classification specifications for VR counselor in the II & III and senior levels. We now advertise for a Counselor II position with the preferred qualification being a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and CRC certified. ARS also established an internal counselor salary grid with the approval of OPM. This grid allows the agency to hire VR counselor in the counselor II series under different salary ranges based on qualification and certification. The grid also allows for cost of living rates for counselor series III and senior counselor levels. All personnel hired by ARS in any position classified as a Rehabilitation Counselor II, III or Senior Counselor will meet the standard of a master's degree and/or be CRC certified. When there is not an applicant with the master's degree, ARS will permit the hiring of a bachelors degreed counselor in a Counselor II position with a condition of employment that the person will seek and obtain a masters degree within three years of employment.

#### **4.10 (d) Staff Development**

(1) The Human Resource Staff Development (HRSD) component of the CSPD team reviews and oversees the current training levels of all personnel in each category. Required standards and evaluation of training needs and timelines are established. Training needs assessments are done with the technical assistance of the regional continuing education program located within the higher education institution within the state. This instrument is used to determine training needs within the agency and aid the agency in allocating in-service training dollars to specific training programs. The HRSD component develops and monitors agency policy and procedure in terms of hiring, training, or retraining personnel to meet standards set within the agency. The local universities are also utilized to provide training opportunities that are noted in the assessment.

(2) ARS ensures that all personnel receive appropriate and adequate continuing education. The agency provides for employees to attend classes, seminars, and conferences, and disseminates information through newsletters, in-service training, workshops, etc. The field program conducts district meetings annually in their respective districts where the latest techniques for providing service to our customers are discussed. Research results are discussed and presented to all VR counselor and support staff. A Fall Conference is conducted where all direct service support

staff and services providers attend and policy, procedures and the latest assistive technology devices are showcased. An annual Spring Training Conference is also conducted. Continuing Education Credits and CRC Certification Credits are provided at the training conferences.

#### **4.10 (e) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs**

ARS will continue to employ personnel who are able to communicate in the native languages of applicants for service and clients who have limited English speaking ability. ARS also provides special communication modes such as interpreters, captioned videos, specialized telecommunications services and materials for individuals who are deaf and deaf-blind, as well as other specialized media systems for individuals with disabilities. Staff with language skills is hired and special equipment is provided as needed. Interpreters are provided in training settings when needed. Sign language skills are included as a minimum qualification for positions providing services to persons who are deaf or hard or hearing. Special entry rates are offered to persons who possess special language or communication skills. ARS also is providing training opportunities in Spanish. Arkansas continues to experience a large influx of Spanish speaking citizens into the state and these citizens are requesting our services. The agency is providing assistance to our employees in order to help them accommodate these needs.

#### **4.10 (f) Coordination with Personnel Development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act**

IDEA updates and changes are forwarded to all direct service support personnel through correspondence and memorandums. Changes and updates are coordinated in our comprehensive system of personnel development that allow us to develop adequate training for all staff. ARS provides training opportunities for our direct service support personnel in the areas of transition. Key VR counselors are involved with state transition coordinators that are provided by the State Department of Education, Special Education within the state. ARS VR counselors are involved in regional transition coordination meetings. A statewide annual Transition Summit is held with ARS being one of the co-sponsors. ARS is also a member of the statewide Transition Advisory Committee. Information on IDEA is forwarded to all ARS employees including the latest IDEA reauthorization updates. The annual Transition Summit has been very helpful in bringing all the stakeholders together that work with our high schools in transitioning disabled student from school to the world of work. ARS is presently looking at restructuring the field program in order to effectively utilize personnel that are working with our partners in the region and area schools. ARS is fully committed to providing transition services through our agency with collaboration and cooperation with the public schools and the State Department of Education, Special Education.

**Attachment 4.11 Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports**

**Attachment 4.11(a) Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs**

**Attachment 4.11(a)(1)(A)**

A Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment was planned and conducted jointly with representatives of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), the State Independent Living Council (SILC), and ARS. Dan Hopkins & Associates (DHA) an entity having staff with extensive background in VR was contracted to conduct the assessment. The final report was presented to the full Council for their review and approval on March 15, 2006. The Agency will continue to work with the Council to address the recommendations from the assessment and will also work cooperatively for the next assessment due in 2009.

**Assessment Results**

The DHA study utilized a mixed-method research design to collect information from a variety of sources including, consumers, their family members, consumer advocates, service providers, and from secondary data sources. Methodology included focus groups, structured interviews, data analysis of agency reports, and a survey instrument was developed. The survey instrument was completed with consumers, family members and service providers from across the state. The study methodology assured attention to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state; particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- (a) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services
- (b) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities
- (c) Individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program
- (d) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system

Age: mode is 47 years old and mean is 41 years old. Respondents are mostly within the labor market age.

Education: 26% have a college degree; 43% have some college but no degree, 21% have a high school diploma; 11% do not have a high school diploma.

Race/Ethnicity: 73% white, 27% minorities.

Disabilities: 67% physical disabilities; 24% mental disabilities

<b>Assessment Findings</b>	<b>Needs</b>
Language: 12% have difficulty reading/writing in English.	Consider literacy in training/educational programs. Utilization of interpreters, translators and staff with second language skills.
Health: About 89% indicate medical problems that need attention.	More collaboration with medical/health professionals and physical restoration.
Employment: 15% state they do not want a job. 85% request employment assistance. Little employment experience - mode is 1 year and the mean is 5 years.	Attention to training and job placements. Increase collaboration with other employment agencies. Consider use of a comprehensive placement plan to emphasize placement and employment outcomes.
Employment Barriers/Earnings: 86% expressed a fear for potential loss of benefits such as Social Security, VA, Medical Coverage, Food Stamps.	More collaboration with other agencies to clarify the benefits situation for clients wishing to be employed to quell their fears. Increase attention and counseling regarding potential employment opportunities and earnings prior to plan development.
Transportation: 50% state that this is not a barrier to employment. 25% state transportation is a barrier to employment.	Need to maintain transportation service to consumers to enhance access to services and to employment.
Communication with ARS: 87% have some information about ARS. 53% have been contacted by ARS. 86% are not aware of any other rehab agencies. 96% have never been contacted by other rehabilitation agencies. 79% have no information about CILs in Arkansas. 93% have never been contacted by an CIL.	Better communication and information dissemination by the CILs to consumers. CILs and ARS need to consider increasing and improving communication, referrals, and joint cases when appropriate.
Consumers' Stated Needs/Goals: 80% Employment 88% Training/Education 70% Restoration/Medical 64% Self Esteem 38% Community Integration	Structure agency focus on these stated needs with clear action plans and strategies for meeting these needs. Consider increasing the use of ALL available resources appropriate to the goals of the plan.

## **Summary of Needs Assessment**

Of the consumers that participated in the assessment 81% reported that they were satisfied with services provided by ARS and 96.4% reported that they would return to ARS if additional services were needed.

The areas of needs indicated in the Assessment were:

- I. Job Development/Placement/Employment Outcomes
- II. Independent Living Centers
- III. Systems Issues and Concerns
- IV. Education and Training
- V. Public Relations/Information and Outreach
- VI. Transition Services

- **Job Development, Job Placement And Employment Outcomes**

The assessment recommended that ARS and its partners consider further study and analysis of its current approaches to the provision of job development and employment services. A majority of participants in the Study identified some degree of dissatisfaction, concern, and need for improved services and outcomes in this area.

- **Independent Living Centers**

Expand, improve outreach, marketing, and public relations activities; become more of a cross disabilities Center; and increase/improve collaborative efforts with ARS, including referrals, joint cases, marketing and public information regarding rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities.

- **Public Relations/Information and Outreach**

While ARS consumers reported having information about and excellent communication with ARS, family members and participants in Focus Group sessions confirmed the critical need for improved and expanded information about the nature, scope, and available of rehabilitation services. It is recommended that this area of need be further studied with the intent to develop and implement a comprehensive plan designed to increase the knowledge of the program, the nature, scope, and availability of services. It is suggested that the plan include multiple strategies and activities to be implemented at the local, regional, and state levels. It is further recommended that the plan include “cross training” for key personnel from agencies and organizations who are service providers to individuals with disabilities to improve and facilitate appropriate referrals, provision of comprehensive services delivered on a timely basis.

**Minority, Unserved and Underserved Populations**

Specific emphasis for all outreach training and related activities needs to be given to both the underserved populations and those from ethnic minority populations.

- **Education And Training**

Education and training efforts designed to assist rehabilitation counselors to achieve the desired certification and “qualified” status should continue. Immediate attention is recommended in those areas of training for rehabilitation counselors, including job placement and employment related issues; technology; effective outreach strategies; case and caseload

management with an emphasis on time management; understanding of disabilities and related medical conditions.

#### Minority, Unserved and Underserved Populations

A major emphasis should be placed on cultural diversity and issues impacting individuals with disabilities from ethnic minority populations.

- **Systemic Issues And Concerns**

ARS has in place manuals regarding agency policy and procedures and other documents designed to instruct personnel in the uniform application of services consistent with the Rehabilitation Act and other requirements in the provision of rehabilitation services. Based on assessment findings it is recommended that ARS further examine these findings and conduct other appropriate inquiries regarding the needs and concerns identified in this study. Rehabilitation Counselors have expressed a need and desire to spend more time with Consumers, but report that a variety of barriers, seemingly related to systemic operations, prevent the delivery of needed quality services.

- **Transition Services**

That ARS further evaluate cooperative efforts with public schools, the timeliness of service delivery, and the nature and scope of services provided for purposes of improving outcomes through the Transition Services Program.

### **Attachment 4.11(a)(1)(B) Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs**

The ARS Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment addressed the need to establish, develop, or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) within the State of Arkansas. A survey of the ARS VR Counselors assessed the need in their respective geographical areas. In response 68.57% reported a need for the CRP's to be expanded/improved, while 31.43% stated that the CRP's they worked with did not need to be expanded/improved. When asked if CRP's needed to be established/constructed 42.86% stated yes, while 57.14% answered no.

Analysis of the responses for the need to improve/expand and establish/construct CRPs, together with a review of the locations of current CRP's, it is clear that several geographical areas, with significant population, do not have adequate services of a CRP. The most notable areas/counties were: Southwest Arkansas including Yell, Arkansas, Carroll, and Pope counties; and South Central Arkansas including Logan and Franklin counties. Other geographical areas where CRP may be needed are: the cities of Mena in the Western area of the state; Harrison and Mt. Home in the North; Conway and Morrilton Northeast of Little Rock; and Helena in Eastern Arkansas.

The VR Counselors were asked to identify the geographical area to which their responses referred. Upon "clustering" their responses regarding improvement/expansion, the responses closely matched the geographical areas in which CRP's currently exist. In response to the inquiry regarding the need to establish/construct CRP's, Counselors identified both the geographical areas (counties) that did not have CRP's and those that need additional CRPs.

The quality and scope of services provided by CRP's was not specifically addressed in the Assessment. Therefore, the need to "improve" services cannot be specifically addressed. The Needs Assessment recommended that "ARS, working in collaboration with the staff of the ARS Community Program Development Section (CPDS) and the ARS District Managers: (a) continue to analyze the data and results of this Study to further determine the need to improve and/or establish CRP's with the State; and (b) That an assessment be made of the quality and scope of services provided by each CRP in relation to the local need."

**Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services**

**Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served  
Under Part B, Sec. 110 Of Title I – FY 2008**

The U.S. Census Bureau indicates 230,031 individuals with an employment disability in Arkansas ages 16-64. (Source U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3.)

Eligible individuals who are most significantly disabled. **COST**

**Priority Category I:**

Number to be Served - 2853      Number to be Rehabilitated - 377      \$ 1,921,108.00

**Priority Category II:**

Eligible individuals who are significantly disabled.

Number to be Served - 17033      Number to be Rehabilitated - 2000      \$ 12,204,679.00

TOTAL TO BE SERVED	TOTAL TO BE REHABILITATED	TOTAL COST
<u>19,885</u>	<u>2,377</u>	<u>\$14,125,787.00</u>

**Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served  
Under Part B Of Title VI -FY 2008**

Disability of Individuals	Number to be Served	%	Number to be Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Projected Funding
Mental Illness	55	23%	21	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 61,239.50
Mental Retardation	96	40%	28	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$106,890.76

Traumatic Head Injury	10	4%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 11,134.45
Other	77	32%	32	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 85,735.29
TOTAL	238	100%	83		\$265,000.00

### **Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State's Goals and Priorities**

The agency has established goals and priorities based on the RSA Standards and Performance Indicators and also the recommendations of the Statewide Needs Assessment. The Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment was planned and conducted jointly with representatives of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and goals and priorities developed with SRC input and approval. The goals are:

1. To successfully meet or exceed the RSA requirements for performance.
2. Enhance the availability and utility of job development and placement services through a comprehensive study and analysis by a Task Force to recommend future action (establish benchmarks) as recommended in the Comprehensive Assessment on page 36.
3. Increase public awareness and knowledge of Vocational Rehabilitation programs and services by 10%.
4. Increase number of CSPD participants by 8%.
5. Reduce systemic barriers that may inhibit counselor interaction with consumers to increase counselor/client contact by 10%.
6. Increase collaboration and partnerships with Centers for Independent Living (CIL) including referrals, marketing and public information.
7. Increase number of students served with transition programs by 10%.
8. Increase availability of assistive technology (AT) for consumers by 5%.
9. Reserve and use a portion of the funds under Sec. 110 for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the state plan and for the support of the SRC and/or the SILC.
10. To increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to CRPs and other vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services.

### **Attachment 4.11(c)(3): Order of Selection**

Under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998) certain state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies are required to have an order of selection. An order of selection requires that a priority is given to individuals with the most significant disabilities in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The order of selection is required when a state determines that there are not sufficient funds to serve all the individuals with disabilities within the state including those with disabilities that are considered non-significant.

The current ARS Order of Selection assures the highest priority in provision of services to clients with the most significant disabilities. Services and expenditures are closely monitored to enable the ARS Commissioner to close or open priority categories as deemed appropriate. This will assure services are continued for cases determined eligible and receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment. Adequate funds will be conserved to provide diagnostic services for all applicants to determine eligibility and category placement.

The Order of Selection priority categories, justification for each, outcome and service goals are listed below:

### **ORDER OF SELECTION**

ARS will provide services based on an Order of Selection on a statewide basis. The ARS Order of Selection assures clients in Priority I and II will have first priority for the provision of services. If funds become available, individuals in Priority III and IV may receive services.

Rehabilitation clients who have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services or extended evaluation (EE) services in place prior to the implementation of the Order of Selection policy will receive services as recorded in their IPE.

#### **Priority Category I - Most Significantly Disabled**

An individual with a most significant disability is defined as one who has a significant physical or mental impairment which:

- 1) Seriously limits **two or more functional capabilities** (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of employment outcome;
- 2) Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services\* over an extended period of time\*\*; and
- 3) Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities as defined below\*\*\*.

#### **Priority Category II - Significantly Disabled**

An individual with a significant disability is defined as one who has a significant physical or mental impairment which:

- 1) Seriously limits **at least one functional capacity area** (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of employment outcome;
- 2) Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple VR services\* over an extended period of time\*\*; and
- 3) Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities as defined below\*\*\*:

#### **Priority Category III - Non-Significantly Disabled Needing Multiple Services**

An individual with a non-significant disability who is expected to require multiple VR services\*.

**Priority Category IV - Non-Significantly Disabled**

An individual with a non-significant disability not classified in a higher priority.

**Definitions:**

\* Two (2) or more major VR services, i.e. counseling, guidance, assistive technology, physical or mental restoration, training, and placement.

\*\* 90 days or more from the date services are initiated.

\*\*\* One or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from: amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), spinal cord conditions (including paraplegia and quadriplegia), sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

**Services And Outcome Goals, And Timelines**

The services and outcome goals, and the timelines for individuals served in each priority category within the ARS Order of Selection are as follows: Priority Category I to serve a total of 2,853 consumers with 377 rehabilitated during FY 2008; and, Priority Category II to serve a total of 17,033 consumers with 2,000 rehabilitated during FY 2008. Priority Category III, Non-Significantly Disabled, has no services planned since sufficient funds are not available during FY 2008.

**Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds**

**Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served Under Part B Of Title VI –FY 2008**

<b>Disability of Individuals</b>	<b>Number to be Served</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number to be Rehabilitated</b>	<b>Supported Employment Model</b>	<b>Projected Funding</b>
Mental Illness	55	23%	21	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 61,239.50
Mental Retardation	96	40%	28	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$106,890.76
Traumatic Head Injury	10	4%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 11,134.45
Other	77	32%	32	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 85,735.29

TOTAL	238	100%	83		\$265,000.00
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**Attachment 4.11(d) State’s Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities**

Goal 1: Strategy

- Agency will continue to work collaboratively with referral sources to increase referrals and consumer advocates to increase the number of potential recipients of services throughout FY 07.
- Agency will provide in service training and mentoring throughout FY07 to increase utilization of presumptive eligibility and serving individuals within the Order of Selection.
- Considering the decrease in employment outcomes in FY 2005 and the anticipated level number in FY 2006, ARS will make a concentrated effort - through increased referrals, enhanced job development and placement services, and most importantly, recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors to fill vacancies - to meet or exceed performance in employment outcomes in FY 2007.
- Agency will increase performance in Supported Employment as reflected in the table on page 16 entitled *4.12(c)(3) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds, Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals In The State To Be Served, Under Part B Of Title VI –FY 2007.*

Goal 2: Strategy

- As follow up to the Needs Assessment the Agency will collaborate with the SRC to convene a placement Task Force by October 31, 2006, that will evaluate current practices, and provide recommendations for enhancing job development/placement services for customers.

Goal 3: Strategy

- Agency will establish a public relations and outreach work group by October 31, 2006, to evaluate current practices, assess agency needs, and provide recommendations to increase public awareness of rehabilitation programs.

Goal 4: Strategy

- Agency will continue providing Comprehensive System of Personnel Development training opportunities and support throughout FY07 to assure development of qualified staff and seamless succession.

Goal 5: Strategy

- Agency will implement an updated policy manual beginning October 1, 2006 to meet RSA 107 recommendations.

- Agency will implement on October 1, 2006, a revised version of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Integrated Management Information System (ARIMIS) that will include the Standard of Occupational codes, and edits that enhance the reporting requirements.

**Goal 6: Strategy**

- Agency will implement strategies to strengthen collaboration with Independent Living Centers.

**Goal 7: Strategy**

- The agency will continue participation throughout FY 07 in the state Transition Task Force to assure collaboration and increase referrals.
- Field services will increase by .05 % the number of counselors available in FY 07 to serve transition cases.

**Goal 8: Strategy**

- Field Services will continue the Successful Employment through Assistive Technology (S.E.A.T.) program throughout FY 07 to increase the assessments and application of technology equipment and devices for consumers.
- Agency will continue collaboration and referrals to the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) to increase awareness and utility of assistive technology.

**Goal 9: Strategy**

- The agency will reserve and use Title I funds for Innovation and Expansion to support the SRC and the SILC.

**Goal 10: Strategy**

- The agency will provide technical assistance and develop incentives to SE providers including CRPs to increase the availability of SE services to consumers. At the same time, the agency will place greater emphasis on supported employment outcomes and traditional sheltered employment outcomes will be de-emphasized. Training will be provided to field services staff regarding the shift from traditional sheltered employment to appropriate supported employment outcomes.

**4.11 (d) Outreach**

- The agency is developing an outreach and leadership initiative to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with significant disabilities. The objectives of the initiative are to form contacts and partnerships with community organizations. The community organizations will include schools, churches, hospitals, Workforce Centers, Community Rehabilitation Programs, state programs, service providers and businesses. Through the partnerships individuals with disabilities who are minorities will be identified who would benefit from ARS VR services, including transition services and/or leadership training. Initially ARS has hired and reassigned two staff to develop the minority outreach initiative, materials and a leadership-training module.

## **Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use Of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities**

### **Introduction**

Department of Workforce Education, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division is the program within the state of Arkansas (along with the DHHS-Division of Services for the Blind) that provides vocational rehabilitation services to assist individuals with significant disabilities in becoming employed and living independently. The state Vocational Rehabilitation programs are funded through the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998) and have been provided through federal and state matching funds since 1973. Federal funding is received through the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education.

### **Goal 1**

To successfully meet or exceed the RSA requirements for performance.

### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS exceeded all RSA requirements for performance on the standards and indicators. ARS performance is listed below.

### **ARS Performance FY 2006 on the Standards And Indicators Established Pursuant To Section 106**

#### **Standard 1: Employment Outcomes**

##### **Performance Indicator 1.1**

The data indicates that the number of individuals in Arkansas who achieved an employment outcome increased during FY 2006 the last year that data is available - from 2,353 in FY 2005 to 2,502 in FY 2006. This exceeds the federal benchmark of performance in current period, which must equal or exceed performance in previous period.

##### **Performance Indicator 1.2**

The data indicates that 59.8% of the individuals in Arkansas who exited the VR program after receiving services achieved an employment outcome that exceeds the federal benchmark of 55.8%.

##### **Performance Indicator 1.3**

The data indicates that the percentage of individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage was 99.76% in Arkansas which exceeds the federal benchmark of 72.6%.

##### **Performance Indicator 1.4**

The data indicates that of all individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who

were individuals with significant disabilities in Arkansas was 88.66% which exceeds the federal benchmark of 62.4%.

#### Performance Indicator 1.5

The data indicates that preliminary results for Performance Indicator 1.5 in Arkansas, the ratio was 0.65, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 0.52.

#### Performance Indicator 1.6

The data indicates that in Performance Indicator 1.6, the mathematical difference between the percentage that reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at exit and the percentage that reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at application was 82.01 in Arkansas that exceeds the federal benchmark of 53.0.

### **Standard 2: Equal Access to Services**

#### Performance Indicator 2.1

The data indicates that in Performance Indicator 2.1, the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds, as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities was 0.88 in Arkansas, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 0.80.

### **Goal 2**

Enhance the availability and utility of job development and placement services through a comprehensive study and analysis by a Task Force to recommend future action (establish benchmarks) as recommended in the Comprehensive Assessment on page 36.

#### **Strategy**

As follow up to the Needs Assessment the Agency will collaborate with the SRC to convene a placement Task Force by October 31, 2006, that will evaluate current practices, and provide recommendations for enhancing job development/placement services for customers.

### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS will continue to have a strategy to convene a placement Task Force to meet this goal, but by November 1, 2007. The activity was delayed due to the legislative session.

### **Goal 3**

Increase public awareness and knowledge of Vocational Rehabilitation programs and services by 10%.

#### **Strategy**

Agency will establish a public relations and outreach work group by October 31, 2006, to evaluate current practices, assess agency needs, and provide recommendations to increase public awareness of rehabilitation programs.

### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

Several activities moved ARS towards this goal including restructuring of the ARS website, development of a PSA and an appearance on television highlighting ARS services, design and dissemination of an ARS brochure, both in English and in Spanish.

### **Goal 4**

Increase number of CSPD participants by 8%. Terry-data

#### **Strategy**

Agency will continue providing Comprehensive System of Personnel Development training opportunities and support throughout FY07 to assure development of qualified staff and seamless succession.

#### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS has 7 VR counselors actively involved in CSPD working on a master's degree. ARS hired 3 VR counselors with CRC last year and another VR counselor passed the CRC exam. This is an increase of 12% of qualified staff under CSPD requirements.

#### **Goal 5**

Reduce systemic barriers that may inhibit counselor interaction with consumers to increase counselor/client contact by 10%.

#### **Strategy**

- Agency will implement an updated policy manual beginning October 1, 2006 to meet RSA 107 recommendations.
- Agency will implement on October 1, 2006, a revised version of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Integrated Management Information System (ARIMIS) that will include the Standard of Occupational Codes, and edits that enhance the reporting requirements.

#### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

- Effective 10-1-06 the entire ARS Policy & Procedure Manual (PPM) was updated and promulgated to comply with federal and state regulations. The manual changes followed findings from the RSA On-site Monitoring, as well as a permanent Policy and Procedures committee. The Committee is composed of representatives from all components of the agency, the SRC and CAP. Policy was revised to comply with Federal regulations and improve and expand services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. The PPM Committee will evaluate policy and procedures on an ongoing basis to assure compliance with state and federal regulations and improve and expand services.
- The Arkansas Rehabilitation Integrated Management Information System (ARIMIS) has been updated. The ARIMIS system is internal to ARS and allows tracking for reporting purposes, review of case status history for counselors and administrators, and eventually purchasing and budgeting with case service funds. In addition, ARS has linked with the State information system, Arkansas Administrative Statewide Information System (AASIS). The next phase of ARIMIS has been implemented. This phase includes edits to reduce errors and requirements for data entry with drop-down menus, limited options and new SOC codes.

#### **Goal 6-**

Increase collaboration and partnerships with Centers for Independent Living (CIL) including referrals, marketing and public information.

#### **Strategy**

Agency will implement strategies to strengthen collaboration with Independent Living Centers.

#### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

ARS designated the ARS Communications staff to serve as liaison to the SILC which includes representation of the Centers.

## **Goal 7**

Increase number of students served with transition programs by 10%.

### **Strategy**

The agency will continue participation throughout FY 07 in the state Transition Task Force to assure collaboration and increase referrals.

### **ARS Evaluation and Progress – New wording-check for accuracy**

ARS continues to participate in the state level Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP). The AITP is a taskforce made-up of representatives of state agencies including ARS, DHHS-Division of Services for the Blind, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Special Education-Transition, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, DHHS-Division of Mental Health, and parent advocates. The mission of AITP is that it will, through coordination and collaboration, identify critical issues to improve lifelong outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities. The activities include evaluation of transition processes and systems, addressing unmet needs, articulating and proposing data-driven system improvement, removing barriers and establishing problem solving local teams. A cooperative agreement is in place with ARS, Division of Services for the Blind and Transition-Dept. of Education-Special Education. ARS co-sponsors a statewide Transition Summit annually. In FY 05 transition age comprised 34.20% of applicants, in FY 06 they were 34.80% of applicants. This indicates a proportional increase of .60%. ARS will continue efforts to increase the number of students served with transition programs.

## **Goal 8**

Increase availability of assistive technology (AT) for consumers by 5%.

### **Strategy**

- Field Services will continue to utilize the Successful Employment through Assistive Technology (S.E.A.T.) program throughout FY 07 to increase the assessments and application of technology equipment and devices for consumers.
- Agency will continue collaboration and referrals to the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) to increase awareness and utility of assistive technology.

### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

The number of referrals for AT increased by 5%.

## **Goal 9**

Reserve and use a portion of the funds under Sec. 110 for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the state plan and for the support of the SRC and/or the SILC.

### **Strategy**

Earmark funds from Title 1, Sec. 110 to support the SRC and the SILC.

### **ARS Evaluation and Progress**

Title I funds for Innovation and Expansion were reserved and used to support the SRC in the annual resource plan and, along with funds from the Division of Services for the Blind, the SILC in the annual budget.

## **Goal 10**

To increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to CRPs and other vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services.

**Strategy**

The agency will provide technical assistance and develop incentives to SE providers including CRPs to increase the availability of SE services to consumers. At the same time, the agency will place greater emphasis will on supported employment outcomes and traditional sheltered employment outcomes will be de-emphasized.

**ARS Evaluation and Progress**

The agency is developing goals and strategies for SEP as a result of the FY 2007 RSA On-Site Review completed June 2007. The evaluation of the extent to which the SE goals were achieved is outlined in the charts below. The targeted number of individuals to be served varied considerably from the actual outcomes. However, there was a significant increase in the number consumers that were rehabilitated over the number projected. Strategy for the future involves an increase focus on appropriate SEP outcomes as opposed to traditional sheltered employment.

**Estimates Of The Number Of Individuals To Be Served Under Part B Of Title VI -FY 2007**

Disability of individuals to be Served	Number To be Served	%	Number to be Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Projected Funding
Mental Illness	19	6%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 16,839.46
Mild Mental Retardation	132	44%	25	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$116,989.97
Traumatic Head Injury	6	2%	0	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 5,317.73
Other	142	47%	27	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$125,852.84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>\$265,000.00</b>

**The Number Of Individuals Actually Served in FY 2007 Under Part B Of Title VI**

Disability of individuals Served	Number Served	%	Rehabilitated	Supported Employment Model	Funding
Mental Illness	50	23%	19	Job Coach/Mobile Crew Transition Employment	\$ 61,342.59
Mild Mental Retardation	87	40%	25	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$106,736.11
Traumatic Head Injury	9	4%	2	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 11,041.67

Other	70	32%	29	Job Coach/Mobile Crew	\$ 85,879.63
TOTAL	216	100%	75		\$265,000.00

### **Attachment 6.3: Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services**

ARS provides Supported Employment (SE) Services in compliance with Sec. 7(36) Definitions of the Act based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment. To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site. SE services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities. ARS identifies and makes arrangements (including entering into cooperative agreements) with other State agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of SE services.

State agency partners involved in ARS SE include the Developmental Disabilities Services, Department of Health and Human Services Division of Behavioral Health Sciences, Division of State Services for the Blind and Arkansas Department of Education. SE providers are utilized statewide. Faulkner Co. Council on Developmental Disabilities in Conway, First Step School in Hot Springs, Easter Seals in Little Rock, Community Employment, Inc. in Springfield, Mo., serving northwest Arkansas, and Abilities Unlimited of Jonesboro are a few of the extensive list of vendors for SE services.

All providers of SE services to consumers of ARS have a written agreement on file stating that they will provide extended services for the client as long as the client has the job. The timing of the transition from employment to extended services is immediate. Extended services begin immediately after the case is closed status 26 when the employment outcome is achieved.