

281—56.29 (259) State rehabilitation council.

56.29(1) Composition. The state rehabilitation council shall be composed of at least 15 members, appointed by the governor. A majority of the council members must be individuals with disabilities who are not employed by the division. The appointing authority must select members of the council after soliciting recommendations from representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities. In selecting members, the appointing authority must consider, to the greatest extent practicable, the extent to which minority populations are represented on the council. A majority of members must be individuals with disabilities who meet the requirements of 34 CFR Section 361.5(c)(28) and are not employed by the designated state unit. The council members shall include the following:

- a. At least one representative of the statewide independent living council, who must be the chairperson or other designee of the statewide independent living council;
- b. At least one representative of a parent training and information center established pursuant to Section 682(a) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- c. At least one representative of the client assistance program established under 34 CFR Part 370, who must be the director or other individual recommended by the client assistance program;
- d. At least one qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor with knowledge of and experience with vocational rehabilitation programs who serves as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the council if employed by the division;
- e. At least one representative of community rehabilitation program service providers;
- f. Four representatives of business, industry, and labor;
- g. Representatives of disability groups that include a cross section of:
 - (1) Individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities; and
 - (2) Representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty representing themselves or are unable, due to their disabilities, to represent themselves;
- h. Current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services;
- i. At least one representative of the state educational agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities who are eligible to receive services under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- j. At least one representative of the Iowa workforce development board; and
- k. The director of the division, who serves as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the council.

56.29(2) Chairperson. The chairperson must be selected by the members of the council from among the voting members of the council.

56.29(3) Terms. Each member of the council shall be appointed for a term of no more than three years. Each member of the council, other than the representative of the client assistance program, shall serve for no more than two consecutive full terms. A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the end of the term for which the predecessor was appointed must be appointed for the remainder of the predecessor's term and may serve one additional three-year term. The terms of service of the members initially appointed must be for a varied number of years to ensure that terms expire on a staggered basis.

56.29(4) Vacancies. The governor shall fill a vacancy in council membership.

56.29(5) Functions. The council must, after consulting with the state workforce development board:

- a. Review, analyze, and advise the designated state unit regarding the designated state unit's responsibilities, particularly responsibilities related to:
 - (1) Eligibility, including order of selection;
 - (2) The extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and
 - (3) Functions performed by state agencies that affect or potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes;

- b.* In partnership with the designated state unit:
- (1) Develop, agree to, and review state goals and priorities in accordance with 34 CFR Section 361.29(c); and
 - (2) Evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and submit reports of progress to the Secretary of Education in accordance with 34 CFR Section 361.29(e);
- c.* Advise the designated state agency and the designated state unit regarding activities carried out under this part and assist in the preparation of the vocational rehabilitation services portion of the unified or combined state plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations;
- d.* To the extent feasible, conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with:
- (1) The functions performed by the designated state agency;
 - (2) The vocational rehabilitation services provided by state agencies and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and
 - (3) The employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals receiving services under 34 CFR Part 361, including the availability of health and other employment benefits in connection with those employment outcomes;
- e.* Prepare and submit to the governor and to the Secretary of Education no later than 90 days after the end of the federal fiscal year an annual report on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the state and make the report available to the public through appropriate modes of communication;
- f.* To avoid duplication of efforts and enhance the number of individuals served, coordinate activities with the activities of other councils within the state, including the statewide independent living council, the advisory panel established under Section 612(a)(21) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the state developmental disabilities planning council, the state mental health planning council, and the state workforce development board, and with the activities of entities carrying out programs under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;
- g.* Provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the designated state agency and the statewide independent living council and centers for independent living within the state; and
- h.* Perform other comparable functions, consistent with the purpose of 34 CFR Part 361, as the council determines to be appropriate, that are comparable to the other functions performed by the council.

56.29(6) Meetings. The council must convene at least four meetings a year. The meetings must be publicly announced, open, and accessible to the general public, including individuals with disabilities, unless there is a valid reason for an executive session. The council's meetings are subject to Iowa Code chapter 21, the open meetings law.

56.29(7) Forums or hearings. The council shall conduct forums or hearings, as appropriate, that are publicly announced, open, and accessible to the public, including individuals with disabilities.

56.29(8) Conflict of interest. No member of the council may cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the member's organization or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law.

Rule 281—56.29(259) is intended to implement 34 CFR Sections 361.16 and 361.17.