



January 9, 2020

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) is asked to submit a report of its outreach efforts to work with community rehabilitation program providers for job placement and retention services for individuals with significant and most significant disabilities.

HF 642 states: For purposes of optimizing the job placement of individuals with disabilities, IVRS shall make its best efforts to work with community rehabilitation program providers for job placement and retention services for individuals with significant disabilities and most significant disabilities. By January 15, 2020, the division shall submit a written report to the general assembly on the division’s outreach efforts with community rehabilitation program providers.

IVRS has continued efforts to create and maintain partnerships with 69 Iowa community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) in 2019. IVRS continued efforts to promote and encourage collaboration by reaching out to CRPs, external vendors and other service providers. The result of this focus has contributed positively to enhancing partnerships, in addition to maintaining competitive, community employment-related options for lowans with disabilities. IVRS has a dedicated staff position performing the outreach activities in collaboration with our CRPs.

A specific focus has been on the implementation of Employment First principles. IVRS was the lead agency for the federal monies received from the Department of Labor’s Office of Disability and Employment Policy for the past six years and has collaborated with the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council to sustain those efforts during the past two years. Since 2012, Iowa has received technical and financial assistance dollars that was directed to community provider transformation to help individuals with the most significant disabilities access community, competitive, integrated employment.

FFY	Amount Expended to CRP’s	Number of Job Candidates with CRP Services
2019	\$3,592,834	2,116
2018	\$3,737,052	2,211
2017	\$3,363,602	2,010
2016	\$2,961,365	1,871
2015	\$2,836,035	1,432
2014	\$1,845,630	988

The 2019 numbers are not final as authorizations and claims for the FFY 19 are not resolved. IVRS has continued to see a slight decrease in number of services provided to our adult caseload, primarily due to the attention and focus on transition and pre-employment transition services required by the Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act. IVRS is now serving close to 9,000 more potentially eligible students than ever before with the change in federal legislation.



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The employment outcomes for individuals receiving supported employment services through our community rehabilitation providers increased from 332 successful employment outcomes to 346. One of the priority areas reviewed is the transition from sheltered workshops at subminimum wage to competitive integrated employment. IVRS is only a partial funder of these services with specific focus on individuals 23 and younger with those age 24 and older receiving primary funding through Medicaid and the Iowa Department of Human Services.

IVRS provided financial support to 44 different Occupational Skills training programs, authorizing services for 240 job candidates totaling \$688,144.66 for FFY 19. Our CRPs are integral to the success of these training efforts to meet the business skill gap.

IVRS implemented a variety of in-service, webinar, on-site and video conference training opportunities available to CRPs throughout the year, as well as performance data specific to each partner. Vendor data is shared annually by IVRS with providers to stimulate conversations with partners, ensure consistent business practices, promote transparency for purchased services, and provide a statewide basis for comparisons and quality assurance improvement. IVRS included additional data points related to time in supported employment, the rehabilitation rate, hours worked and dollars earned. Data was shared across systems to provide an opportunity to review outcome quality to set standards and review the effectiveness of office and CRP collaboration. The data measures are the same standards IVRS is held accountable to with federal reporting. All CRP providers were contacted and received specific communication and outreach from IVRS staff. The initial results were positive indicating an improvement from 2018-2019 in mean score.

IVRS will continue to collaborate and proactively respond to the demands of an ever-changing job market to fulfill our mission and effectively provide the necessary services to help individuals with disabilities achieve full integration into community employment. Towards this end, IVRS has put forth a dedicated effort to expand opportunities to collaborate, innovate and network with entities and align resources with community partners. With implementation of the federal legislation, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act, it is vital to align service delivery efforts, avoid duplication, and leverage funding to maximize the capacity of all employment service providers to meet the needs of Iowans with disabilities.

Respectfully Submitted,

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