

VR Planning Update

SFY 2017-18 QUARTER 3

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Topic 1. Transition- Overview

<p>FRC Recommendation Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early contact and the provision of Information and Referral (I&R) guidance for transition students • Expand and offer additional opportunities for pre-vocational and/or technical training for students • Increase communication and collaboration by VR representatives with school districts and increase participation in the education of options available to students • Initiate peer mentoring in Florida • Increase the capacity of transition service providers while encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurial options
<p>VR Response</p>	<p>WIOA provides great opportunities for VR to increase transition services and opportunities to youth with disabilities. Increased Information and Referral to transition age youth is built into WIOA, and VR has already begun providing more transition service-related information to youth. Although VR approaches and offers TPCA partnerships to all school districts in Florida, the partnership is dependent on the individual district’s decision to participate. VR has recently hired another transition administrator to ensure that standard information is provided consistently to all school districts, and to coordinate and monitor active and potential TPCA partnerships.</p> <p>Two peer mentoring initiatives are planned at this time. A peer mentoring/IPS project with a youth element is being developed in Broward County, and a youth-specific peer mentoring project is being developed in partnership with Florida Atlantic University. VR will keep FRC updated on their progress.</p> <p>Additional initiatives are under way to increase provider capacity and offer more opportunities to youth. These include approval of CareerSource Florida to provide preplacement services, revision of Certified Business and Technical Assistance Consultants (CBTAC) recertification procedures, and increase in CBTAC and Discovery providers. VR is also partnering with Volunteer Florida, Centers for Independent Living, Florida ARC and High School High Tech to offer more OJT and work readiness opportunities.</p>
<p>Strategic Linkages</p>	<p>FRC Strategic Link Goal 1- To enhance the effectiveness of VR services Goal 2- To establish and strengthen partnerships</p> <p>2016 VR Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Link Goal 7- Increase the percentage of youth who received pre-employment transition services and who obtained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent Goal 8- Increase the percentage of participants who are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or to employment Goal 9- Increase the number of students receiving pre-employment transition services</p>

Topic 1. Transition- Program Updates

Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE) Expansion

November 2016-

In 2015, during the VR Administrator's Statewide visits, Third Party Cooperative Arrangement (TPCA) Expansion information was provided to School Districts on the TPCA contract. As a result, four (4) additional school districts have signed on to offer TPCAs this year. This engagement will provide the most employment opportunities to the total number of TPCA and Employment Specialists for the coming year.

January 2017-

A total of 24 schools with 32 employment specialists will offer TPCAs in the 2016-17 school year. A meeting with Special Contracts has been scheduled in late January to discuss contract changes for the upcoming year, which will increase the overall number of Employment Specialists and increase the number of students served. In addition, the 17-18 TPCA webinar for school districts to learn more about TPCAs has been scheduled and was announced to ESE and Student Service Directors in the BEESS weekly. TPCAs will be addressed on the late January BEESS ESE and SS Directors' Call. The 2017-2018 TPCA Memorandum and FAQ has been drafted and is currently being vetted.

May 2017- Outreach is currently progressing with districts, and the TPCA Contract has been revised to allow districts to hire more Employment Specialists to serve more VR SE students.

August 2017-

Currently, 20 School Districts have applied and been confirmed for TPCAs next school year. This will provide 29 Employment Specialist (ES) serving a minimum of 174 students. Additionally, another 5 districts have applied, but are awaiting (SE) student verification. If these districts reach their minimums, an additional 8 ES will be funded, increasing services to a minimum of 222 students with most significant disabilities. VR and School District Staff training for the upcoming TPCA year is being designed and will be held in August and September respectively.

November 2017-

Currently there are 25 sites for the 17-18 school year, with 39 Employment Specialists being supported by VR. TPCA will reach a minimum of 234 student as each ES must serve a minimum of 6 Supported Employment students. Training has been completed for school district and VR staff. Resources for all TPCA stakeholders are being finalized and/or approved at this time. These will be included on the TPCA website and VR i-Net.

January 2018-

There are 25 school districts currently participating in the TPCA. There are currently 39 Employment Specialists working with 300 however, this number will increase by the end of the year. We are currently revising the contract to allow for the expansion of Pre-ETS to more students with disabilities served by school districts.

Youth Peer
Mentoring
Project

May 2018-

VR will be entering into contractual fee for service agreements with school districts to offer Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE) during the school day and throughout the school year. This new process will provide increased opportunities for additional students with disabilities to participate in WBLE. The new agreements will effectively replace existing TPCA agreements.

November 2016-

In May 2016, the Youth Peer Mentoring Pilot Project began in 3 counties in VR Area 5: Palm Beach, Broward and Glades. As of Oct. 2016, 13 individuals are certified as Youth Peer Mentoring Coordinators for six provider agencies. Providers are in various stages of hiring Peer Mentors or delivering Peer Mentoring services. Training is offered as frequently as needed to accommodate new providers.

January 2017-

Currently, 21 individuals are certified as Youth Peer Mentoring Coordinators, 3 individuals are certified as Peer Mentors, and 11 Provider Agencies are certified to deliver Peer Mentoring services. Providers remain in various stages of hiring Peer Mentors and delivering the service. Fifty-two students have been referred for this service since its inception. Plans to expand this service to other areas will be determined after an evaluation is conducted.

May 2017-

Referrals of students to Peer Mentoring services continue to increase, and increases have been seen in the number of Peer Mentors. The project continues to gain steam.

August 2017-

VR is entering into an Intensive Technical Assistance Plan with the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC). WINTAC will assist to formalize Youth Peer Mentoring processes and procedures and support expansion from the state pilot to a statewide program.

November 2017-

VR has entered into an Intensive Technical Assistance Plan (ITAP) with the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) for assistance in formalizing VR Youth Peer Mentoring processes. The ITAP will support expansion from the three county pilot to a statewide program. The Plan includes recruitment and training of VR Employment Services providers and counseling staff throughout the state by March 2018. Between October 2016 and September 2017, 37 youth received Youth Peer Mentoring services.

January 2018-

As a result of recruiting activities, approximately 57 additional providers expressed interest in delivering Youth Peer Mentoring services from all regions of the state. Providers and VR Counselors will receive Youth Peer Mentoring services training throughout January 2018.

Pre-ETS
Services

May 2018-

As of April 2018, 58 provider agencies are in varying stages of the training process and 18 of those are in the final application process to become Youth Peer Mentoring Providers. Training to recruit additional providers will be offered in late April.

November 2016-

The Student Transition Activities Record (STAR) Program is in the final testing stages and is on pace to go live with School Districts by the end of October. To date, information has been shared with School District Staff on STAR during Sheila's statewide meetings and follow-up progress calls. School District Point of Contact has been identified and districts have been aligned to VR Units. The VR Staff working with STAR students have been assigned. The STAR Application has been developed and VR Staff have participated in an Application demo with questions fielded by the VR Administrator. User Guides have been written and reviewed. Internal STAR training has been developed in TED and was made available to those who play a role in STAR. Training for School District staff has been created and will be available via webinar. The dates for these trainings are 10/19/16 and 10/20/16. A STAR Training with providers took place on 10/18/16. STAR will go live upon the completion of all required activities. Since finishing up the statewide collaborative meetings between school districts and local VR staff in June, the VR Administrator in charge of Local Education Agency Outreach/Follow-up (LEA) has been in communication with District ESE administration to follow-up on engagement, outreach, and collaboration progress. This contact has been via email and phone calls. In some areas where additional support was required, follow-up meetings via conference call were facilitated to develop the required deliverables. In addition, ESE Administration has been updated about STAR via phone calls, emails, and most recently a mailing which provided STAR materials to help districts prepare for new and expanding Transition Youth services to students with disabilities.

January 2017-

The STAR Program went live in early November, 2016. Since then, the Transition Administrator has presented on STAR to ESE and Student Services Directors during the statewide Director's call, as well as the Secondary Students Transition Interagency Committee. All public school ESE Directors and DOE identified charter schools have been contacted and received follow-up information on STAR. Weekly technical assistance sessions were held with VR Youth Techs responsible for STAR in November. Bi-weekly sessions have continued in December and January. A number of resources and materials have been developed by the Transition Administrator to aid the VR Youth Techs. Currently, 27 school districts have school district representatives with the capacity to make STAR referrals, and 67 students have been referred to STAR.

May 2017- Currently, 49 Districts are involved in STAR, and 149 referrals have been made. So far, 5 Districts have modified referral processes based on needs. Outreach and training for STAR continues with District administration as well as on a local level to assist with the effort of improving STAR outcomes.

August 2017-

Currently, 53 Districts are involved in STAR (making referrals, have a POC, and/or have SDRs identified), 6 have modified referral processes based on need, 952 referrals made. Although outreach and training continues with District Admin and with school staff, VR is researching alternative ways to bypass SDs to increase STAR Referrals.

November 2017-

Currently, 1,305 STAR Referrals have been received throughout the state and 56 Districts have signed up SDRs to enter referrals. We currently have 33 Youth Techs set up in the system to enter referrals. Many of these were assigned for the districts who have not yet designated SDRs for their districts. Referrals are being made for all Pre-ETS at this time.

January 2018-

As of 1/4/18, there have been 2314 STAR referrals made. 58 of the 74 districts (including Florida Lab schools) have at least 1 person in place to enter STAR Referrals. 5 Districts have alternate STAR Referral processes in place. VR is working with Project 10 and BEESS to develop ways to engage the remaining districts.

May 2018-

Language is being revised to emphasize Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) and increase awareness that these are all VR services, regardless of how a student with a disability accesses them. The Student Transition Activities Record (STAR) will only be referenced in conjunction with referrals made through the STAR Portal. The language shared internally and externally is emphasizes the services specific to Pre-ETS and that students may be referred for Pre-ETS through the STAR Portal or to a VR office. Electronic and paper-based resources and training materials are being revised to include these changes. To date, there have been 4,182 Pre-ETS referrals made through the STAR Portal. Of these, 3,071 are currently active. There is increased interest from school districts to become a VR provider for Pre-ETS. This is due in part to the success of VR Summer Youth Programs which increased awareness of how Pre-ETS benefits students. School districts have existing relationships with students and their families they can leverage to increase student participation in Pre-ETS.

Project SEARCH
Expansion

November 2016-

A VR Administrator has worked closely with the Florida Developmental Disability Council to support the expansion of Project Search sites in Florida. It is anticipated that there will be additional sites this 2016-2017 school year as well as additional expansion in 2017-2018 school year.

January 2017- No new updates

May 2017- VR is working on the expansion of Project SEARCH with the goal of beginning 2017-18 with 15 new sites. VR is actively working with our partners, as well as developing new partnerships with schools, businesses, and providers.

August 2017-

VR anticipates around 10 new Project Search sites for the upcoming school year. The DD Council funded an expansion of up to 15 new sites for the 2017-18 school year. They have extended that by one year if 15 sites are not realized so the expansion may continue into the next year but only to bring them up to 15 sites.

November 2017-

We have 10 new sites for the 2017-18 school year and they are:

Bayfront Health, Charlotte County

Kindred Hospital, Clay County

Naples Community Hospital, Collier County

Lake City Medical Center, Columbia/Suwannee County

Hilton Ocala, Marion County

Gaylord Palms Resort, Osceola County

Renaissance World Golf Resort, St John's County

Stetson University, Volusia County

Baptist Hospital, Nassau County

University of North Florida, Duval County

Additionally, the FDDC has approved the development of 5 additional sites for the 2018-19 school year. The counties selected were Alachua, Hillsborough, Flagler, Lake and St. Lucie.

January 2018-

We currently have 32 active sites in FL and will be opening 5 new sites in August 2018 according to the Project SEARCH state liaison.

May 2018-

Florida Project SEARCH Statewide Meetings will be held at the end of April in Clewiston and Lake City. National Project SEARCH Business Manager, Christina Armstrong, will share updated information with new and existing sites. Topics will include strategies for business liaisons to improve communication and increase awareness in the community.

Topic 2. Order of Selection- Overview

FRC Recommendation Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase communication on how customers with the most significant disabilities will be served• Increase service capacity and reduce wait times for those currently on Order of Selection• Continue to work on the information and referral (I&R) processes
VR Response	<p>VR will continue to provide FRC with information on WIOA-related changes through quarterly director’s reports and planning updates, and via email in between quarterly meetings. VR has been diligently working to reduce the number of people on the waitlist as well as time spent on the waitlist, and both have decreased over the past year. It is anticipated that the Category 2 waitlist will be empty by January 2016. As noted, VR continues to improve its information and referral materials, and welcomes FRC’s feedback on this, as well as their recent offer to help with further revisions.</p>
Strategic Linkages	<p>FRC Strategic Link Goal 1- To enhance the effectiveness of VR services</p> <p>2016 VR Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Link Goal 1- Decrease the average wait list time for reportable individuals</p>

Topic 2. Order of Selection- Updates

Waitlist Status

November 2016-

Categories 1 and 2 have been empty since December 2015. Approximately 557 customers remain on the Category 3 waitlist as of September 2016. Average time on waitlist is currently 333 days, a substantial decrease from the SFY 2015-16 average of 643 days.

January 2017-

Categories 1 and 2 have been empty since December 2015. Approximately 293 customers remain on the Category 3 waitlist as of December 2016. Average time on waitlist is currently 134 days, a substantial decrease from the SFY 2015-16 average of 643 days.

May 2017-

Categories 1 and 2 have been empty since December 2015. Approximately 215 customers remain on the Category 3 waitlist as of March 2017. Average time on waitlist is currently 100 days, a substantial decrease from the SFY 2015-16 average of 643 days, and this time continues to decrease. All customers in Category 3 will now have an application date in 2017.

August 2017-

Categories 1 and 2 have been empty since December 2015. Approximately 55 customers remain on the Category 3 waitlist as of July 2017. Average time on waitlist is currently 71 days.

November 2017-

Categories 1 and 2 remain empty. Approximately 37 customers remain on the waitlist as of October 2017, and the average wait time is 62 days.

January 2018-

Categories 1 and 2 remain empty. Approximately 92 customers remain on the waitlist as of December 2017, and the average wait time is 52 days.

May 2018-

Categories 1 and 2 remain empty. Approximately 175 customers remain on the waitlist as of March 2018, and the average wait time is 84 days.

Job Retention Services

November 2016-

Since Job Retention services began in May 2016, approximately 350 customers have been released from the waitlist and received this service. This service, created by WIOA, allows VR agencies under OOS to provide services to individuals at risk of losing their job.

January 2017-

Since Job Retention services began in May 2016, approximately 420 customers have been released from the waitlist and received this service. This service, created by WIOA, allows VR agencies to provide services to individuals at risk of losing their job.

May 2017-

Since Job Retention services began in May 2016, approximately 478 customers have been released from the waitlist and received this service. This service, created by WIOA, allows VR agencies under OOS to provide services to individuals at risk of losing their job, outside of OOS guidelines.

The most common services provided under the Job Retention program are as follows:

Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairments Category-

- 1. Physical Restoration
- 2. Mental Restoration
- 3. Prosthetics and Orthotics

Rehab Technology Category-

- 1. Technical Aids/Services
- 2. Hearing Aids

August 2017-

Since Job Retention services began in May 2016, approximately 538 customers have been released from the waitlist and received this service.

November 2017-

Since Job Retention services began in May 2016, approximately 604 customers have been released from the waitlist and received this service.

January 2018-

Since Job Retention services began in May 2016, approximately 658 customers have been released from the waitlist and received this service.

May 2018-

Area	N#
1	88
2	204
3	146
4	121
5	125
6	4
7	49
Statewide	737

Topic 3. Job Placement Strategies- Overview

FRC Recommendation Highlights

- Evaluate the rehabilitation engineering contract or the different types of services offered
- Strengthen engagement efforts with business leaders to develop long-range employment options
- Develop a deeper understanding of customer strengths and develop tools to communicate succinctly to potential employers
- Increase OJT options, self-employment options, and the use of Discovery
- Additional supports for job customization
- Additional Innovation and Expansion grants
- Services in rural areas

VR Response

VR is currently working with the University of South Florida to update their contract, with the intent to strengthen the use of rehabilitation engineering services for VR customers. As with all services provided or funded by VR, environmental modifications are authorized on a case-by-case basis, according to the specific customer's employment needs and goals outlined in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). As part of IPE development, VR uses the Engineer Evaluation to identify services needed.

VR has formalized its Business Relations Program, and its vision is 'to build and sustain partnerships with business and industry through effective services that are driven by the needs of employers. Efforts are currently focused on defining and customizing services to employers and creating strategic partnerships to support workforce needs. VR anticipates that this will increase competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for jobseekers with disabilities.

The Supported Employment Service model is founded on two primary premises. Supported Employment assumes that all individuals, regardless of their disability, have the capacity and should be afforded the opportunity to engage in competitive integrated employment with appropriate support services. The second concept is the need for the support services to be available so that individuals are able to be successful in their employment outcomes for the long term, not just while VR is able to assist.

The recognition of the need for Follow Along or Extended services (Phase 2) is critical and VR has devoted trainings for Counselors to recognize all the opportunities for funding Phase 2, such as Private pay, Social Security Work Incentives, local community grants, as well as giving priority to Natural and Employer Supports. VR has also recognized that quality placements that are individually developed require less support in Phase 2 and make it much more likely that natural supports can provide the required supports.

VR has also worked to expand the Discovery as a person-centered planning tool that helps provide more opportunities for supported employment. In addition, VR is now adding a Customized Placement Benchmark as an option with a higher provider reimbursement rate for this benchmark. Part of the approval and success of that

benchmark is that natural supports are prioritized and developed from the beginning of the job negotiation process.

VR has the option under WIOA to provide up to four years of extended services for youth, if necessary, and if funding is available. The youth programs that VR is invested in are anticipated to help young adults move into supported employment with more skills, which will reduce their need for Phase 2 Services. The more experiences and work skills that individuals have the opportunity to develop, the increased likelihood of their supported employment placement being a successful experience.

It should be noted that the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) received a \$1,000,000 allocation to provide employment related supports for individuals on APD's waiting list. These funds may be used for employment and employment-related services such as Phase 2, Internships, transportation, work clothes etc. VR is working with APD to help identify individuals who may be mutual customers who could benefit from this service. While it is not available to all VR customers, it is an additional funding option for Phase 2 services so that counselors are comfortable that there is a reasonable expectation of those necessary supports. VR will continue to work with APD and the Department of Children and Families' Mental Health Program Office to seek additional resources for Phase 2 of Supported Employment services.

More research and discussion is needed to determine where Innovation and Expansion grants can best serve Florida's jobseekers with disabilities. Opportunities, when identified, will be offered through formal procurement processes. VR recognizes this as an opportunity that could be beneficial and complimentary to WIOA-related initiatives.

Strategic Linkages

FRC Strategic Link

Goal 2- To establish and strengthen partnerships

Goal 3- To advocate and maximize employment opportunities for all individuals with disabilities

2016 VR Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Link

Goal 2- Increase the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after they exit the program

Goal 3- Increase the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after they exit the program

Goal 5- Increase the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after they exit the program

Topic 3. Job Placement Strategies- Program Updates

Business Relations Program

November 2016-

A business process was created to integrate and streamline Business Relations to better serve employers and VR counselors, improve applicant pre-screening, and increase employment outcomes for VR jobseekers. In addition, the Business Relation team increased collaboration and consultation with business partners to improve operations and coordination significantly, as well as facilitate data collection and reporting. These partners were engaged to expand and support Customized Employment and Internships for VR jobseekers; e.g., the Able Trust's and Florida Chamber Foundation's internship initiative. Similarly, the program team collaborated with Career Source FL, Economic Development Councils, industry associations, and similar partners to create a pipeline of qualified jobseekers for FL DEO targeted occupations.

Training on disability awareness was provided to local businesses, and providers and counselors were trained on OJT to increase OJT referrals, as multiple business partners have stated willingness to provide OJT.

Outreach and presentations are being given to local government, various civil society groups, businesses, and conferences, including Chambers, local chapters of the Society for Human Resources, HR Florida, and the FL Workforce Professional Development Summit.

January 2017-

State law requiring state agencies to increase the recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities has taken effect. Business Relations, including the Abilities Work Help Desk, is now responding to state agencies' requests for support for this initiative. Increased work experience opportunities, such as OJT and job shadowing for VR customers are anticipated.

May 2017-

Aspects of the change in Florida legislation requiring state agencies to increase recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities has been passed to the DMS Affirmative Action Workgroup, although the Business Relations Program and Abilities Work Help Desk remain key players in facilitating these efforts. The Business Relations Program is continuing to refine business processes to integrate and streamline Business Relations and the Abilities Work Help Desk. In addition, Salesforce is being customized in consultation with Business Relations and the Help Desk, and when implemented is expected to improve operations and coordination significantly, as well as facilitate data collection and reporting. Business Relations is currently providing training to counselor staff on how to use RIMS Employment Module, the Talent Acquisition Portal, and on local labor market information, including career opportunities with business partners. Training on disability awareness is also being provided to businesses, as well as market and coordination services to those businesses that have employees with disabilities

they would like to retain or advance. Similarly, collaboration with VR Employment Service Providers and businesses to coordinate services to employers is ongoing, as is outreach and presentations to Chambers, local chapters of the Society for Human Resources, HR Florida, Workforce Professional Development Summit, and similar business organizations.

August 2017-

Upcoming training is scheduled in cooperation with DEO for Business Relations and the Bureau of Vendor and Contracted Services on LMI and Florida's Occupational Supply/Demand system. This new system is intended to support Workforce program planning. The training will be evaluated for usefulness for all VR staff and employment services providers. Salesforce has been customized in consultation with Business Relations and the Abilities Work Help Desk and was released June 19. It is expected to improve operations and coordination significantly, as well as facilitate WIOA data collection and reporting of business services. VR is participating in a populations outreach workgroup on Florida's ApprenticeshipUSA grant to increase participation of individuals with disabilities in apprenticeships. There are now 11 (not 12) Business Relations Representatives positions, due to a recent vacancy that will not be filled because of the anticipated reorganization of the VR administrative areas. Three of the 11 positions are vacant: Area 1 Pensacola, Area 3 Orlando, and Area 6 Miami. Hiring for these positions is in various stages of the process.

November 2017-

In July 2017, training was conducted by DEO for Business Relations and the Bureau of Vendor and Contracted Services on LMI and Florida's Occupational Supply/Demand system. After completion of the training, Business Relations staff can use the system to train VR counselors on how to use Labor Market Information to develop IPE's.

Since its inception, it has allowed Business Relations staff to track employer data and view employer data across areas. Salesforce also allows the administrators to create reports to provide DVR areas with employer information, track employer outreach, and calculate performance measurements.

Selected Business Relations Representatives attended the United States Business Leadership Network conference in August 2017. This event is an employer penetration and outreach opportunity and Business Relations represented VR at the event to provide information about our Business Relations services. Business Relations staff will attend the CareerSource Florida Workforce Summit in October 2017. This event is an opportunity for Business Relations staff to attend presentations and workshops about current employment trends and demand occupations.

Three of the 11 positions are vacant: Area 1 Pensacola, Area 2 Ocala, and Area 6 Miami. Hiring for these positions is in various stages of the process.

January 2018-

VR is participating in the Population Outreach (Regina Rice) **and** the Business Outreach (Kathy Davis) workgroups of the ApprenticeshipUSA grant.

VR Business Relations is participating with WIOA partners in the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's Integrated Business Services Cohort to improve integration of business services across workforce, education, and economic development.

Business Relations and the Help Desk are sending position openings from CSAVR's Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) to Counselor staff to increase career opportunities for VR consumers.

Business Relations has created opportunities for summer worksite training with business partners in the Firefighting and Construction Industries by developing a model that includes businesses, local schools, STAR and VR students, and providers. A white paper and reporting on outcomes will occur at the completion of the summer 2018 Construction program.

VR Business Relations will be the topic during an Employment First webinar January 23. 2 vacancies: Area 2 Jacksonville and Ocala. Area 4 hired their Business Relations Representative into a Career Service position.

May 2018-

The Abilities Work Help Desk continues to provide resources to connect employers to additional qualified job seekers by providing information and referral source for employers to learn about hiring individuals with disabilities. Our goal is to help increase Employment Opportunities for Person with Disabilities across occupations. Sales Force application has been implemented and went live JUNE2017 which has streamlined our Employer Applicant Request processes. The workload for AWHHD has continue to increase however, JUNE2018 will provide us with a full year scope of data using our new Sales Force Application.

Partnering with our Business Relations Team, we will have a great amount of data for reporting to track information such as: Employers, Applicant Requests, Jobs, Candidates Referred and/or Hire, Field Responses/Feedback, and more. As of this past quarter, (JAN-MAR 2018) we have reported 4 successful hires.

In addition, AWHHD continues to find ways of improvement to better meet the needs of Florida's Employers in hiring qualified individuals with disabilities.

Business Relations is working on Pre-ETS Coordination of Services. Training was provided to the BRR's by Sheila Ward on how to serve transition youth through our work with employers. The focus was on working with employers to provide youth work-based learning experiences.

Abilities Work
Help Desk

Salesforce is being used by Business Relations and the Abilities Work Help Desk to track interactions with employers. Administrators can create reports in Salesforce to provide data on employer outreach, and job placements.

In May and June, the BRR's will be doing field training with the provider liaisons for providers. This training will provide the field staff with the link between the Business Relations Program role and the Provider Liaison role.

There are 4 vacancies- Two in Area 2 Jacksonville and Ocala, one in area 6 Miami, and one in area 5 Fort Myers.

January 2016-

A business processes was created to integrate and streamline the Abilities Work Help Desk to better serve employers and VR counselors, improve applicant pre-screening, and increase employment outcomes for VR jobseekers. Counselor staff were trained on how to use RIMS Employment Module to populate the Abilities Work Help Desk Portal with ready to work VR jobseekers. Similarly, training was developed on the Abilities Work Help Desk for DEO's Learning Management System for workforce boards. The Help Desk is currently staffed by a supervisor and one employee. One position is vacant and can be filled if workload volume increases.

January 2017- No new updates

May 2017-

Aspects of the change in Florida legislation requiring state agencies to increase recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities has been passed to the DMS Affirmative Action Workgroup, although the Business Relations Program and Abilities Work Help Desk remain key players in facilitating these efforts. The Help Desk has developed communications materials and processes for state agencies seeking assistance with the implementation of this legislative change, and has given multiple presentations to stakeholders like Employment First and DMS. There is a vacant position in the Help Desk, and this position will be advertised as soon as workload volume has increased.

August 2017-

The Help Desk is currently staffed by a Supervisor and one employee. There is an anticipated vacancy in the Supervisor's position for the AWHD. One additional position will remain vacant due to budget constraints and currently manageable workloads.

November 2017-

The Help Desk has a new supervisor that began on October 16, 2017. One employee position will remain vacant and one position is filled. It is anticipated that with Salesforce the job posting process will become more streamlined. Upon the completion of the VR Works training that is being conducted statewide, it is projected that the workload may increase for the AWHD as the number of qualified applicants should increase in the Help Desk Portal.

January 2018- (No updates)

May 2018- Combined with Business Relations update above

DMS Affirmative
Action
Workgroup

May 2017- (new topic)

The DMS Affirmative Action Workgroup has been developing program strategies and resources needed to implement new Florida legislation requiring state agencies to hire more persons with disabilities, with the goal of improving outcomes for them within the State Personnel System. In addition, the Workgroup has conducted joint presentations with the Business Relations Program regarding these changes to a DMS community of interest meeting. The Workgroup has now concluded its implementation planning, and is supporting the legislation by responding to requests for partnerships with numerous state agencies and forwarding these to field staff through the Abilities Help Desk. Multiple direct hire and OJT opportunities have been generated from these meetings.

August 2017- (no update)

November 2017- (no changes)

January 2018- (no changes)

May 2018- (no changes)

Supported
Employment

November 2016-

VR continues to be a partner in the Rural Routes to Employment which is a joint project funded by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. This training initiative helps Employment Specialist identify resources in their community and form a Community Action Team. Participating staff receive training on employment strategies including Discovery and Customized Employment options.

VR Administrator has presented with Meghan Murray, Director of Community Supports for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities at several statewide conferences regarding the partnership between the two agencies. Specific focus was on Phase 2 funding and how to ensure that both VR and APD staff understand the availability of funds available. APD has Employment Enhancement Funds available for individuals on the waiting list and may have funds available through the Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver for Phase 2 services for individuals on the Waiver. A cooperative agreement remains in development. A VR Administer is working with APD and AHCA to complete this collaborative agreement.

January 2017-

VR Administrator continues to work closely with Meghan Murray, Director of Community Supports for the Agency with Persons for Disabilities (APD). They serve on several committees together and are working hard to ensure that APD and VR staff are aware of the various funding options for Phase II Services. VR and APD have completed the development of a Data Sharing Agreement and are sharing information in order to determine who the mutual customers are so that appropriate services can be planned for and provided as appropriate. A new Memorandum of Agreement is under development between the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Agency for Health Care Administration, and Vocational Rehabilitation. The Memo will formalize

collaborative processes. VR has added a new benchmark under Supported Employment that promotes and incentivizes customized employment opportunities. Training will begin on this new option in February for providers and VR staff.

May 2017-

The definition of Supported Employment and Short-Term Basis has been revised, and SE policies and procedures are currently under revision in order to meet with the new definition requirements related to SE. Per the new definition, Supported Employment means competitive integrated employment, including customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment that is individualized, and customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities—

(A) For whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred, or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and

(B) Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by DVR, in order to perform this work.

The new definition of Short-Term Basis as referenced in the new Supported Employment definition means, for purposes of this part, an individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of competitive integrated employment, is considered to be working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving competitive integrated employment—

(A) Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or

(B) In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary, based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record.

August 2017-

VR is one of nine partner agencies who are collaborating on an Employment First Collaborative Toolkit (EFCT) project sponsored by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. The purpose of the project is to provide training, technical assistance and resources for agency and organization staff engaged in supporting employment for all individuals with disabilities, so that they will realize and sustain quality integrated competitive employment at or above minimum wage.

November 2017-

The Supported Employment (SE) Administrator continues to collaborate with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities to assist mutual customers in obtaining and maintaining employment. Area Directors and Area Supervisors participated in training that highlighted the important changes in SE based on WIOA updates to the Rehabilitation Act and recent guidance from RSA. Training will continue for the field staff on these updates.

January 2018-

The Supported Employment (SE) Senior Consultant has worked with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to formalize collaborative process that have been implemented to improve outcomes for mutual customers.

There are follow up sessions planned for individuals who expressed an interest in VR services during the VR funded Career Counseling Information and Referral Service courses. These sessions will be designed to support and encourage individuals to move from subminimum wage employment into competitive integrated employment with support from VR, APD, and local providers.

May 2018-

VR engagement in Supported Employment for all individuals has significantly increased in recent years. RSA noted in their monitoring report that the Florida VR Supported Employment performance is considerably higher than the national average. VR continues to invest resources in evidence based programming for Supported Employment services, especially for youth ages 24 and under.

Discovery/
Customized
Employment

November 2016-

Discovery Courses continue to be offered 3-4 times per year for community providers to expand options for jobseekers.

January 2017-

Discovery remains a service that is available to individuals with the most significant disabilities. Courses for providers are available approximately every quarter. There are training plans available to increase the use of Discovery by providing additional training to VR staff.

May 2017-

Currently, there are 90 registered Discovery providers in Florida. In addition, 21 new providers have registered to begin a Discovery/CE course which begins on March 28, 2017. By requests from providers, these courses will now be scheduled more frequently. All courses since June 2016 have added additional modules on customized employment.

Customized Employment training continues for both VR counselors and providers with a webinar scheduled for March 29, 2017. The webinar will be recorded and available on our internal and external websites. In addition, the new and enhanced Customized

Job Placement Benchmark will be available for use in mid-April. This benchmark incentivizes the use of customized strategies in developing quality placements for individuals who need this intense support and assistance. The benchmark pays double the regular benchmark in order to compensate providers for taking the time and using customized strategies. Only a Discovery/Customized Employment provider is eligible to use this benchmark.

August 2017-

A Discovery/Customized Employment Course began in June 2017 with 17 individuals participating in the course.

November 2017-

The Customized Job Placement Benchmark has been implemented and is available to use for customers who may require a more individualized or negotiated employment option. This benchmark is based on a determination of the strengths, needs, and interests of the individual, and is also designed to meet the specific needs of an employer. An enhanced rate of payment has been approved in acknowledgement that this approach is more time intensive on the part of the employment provider. Provider courses are ongoing.

January 2018-

Discovery/CE courses continue to be offered 3 to 4 times per year to build service delivery capacity for employment providers who wish to add Discovery/CE endorsement to their approved services. The fourth course for 2017 is currently wrapping up and a new course will begin in late February.

May 2018-

Discovery courses continue to be offered for providers who are interested in expanding their array of VR services to include Discovery/Customized Employment. A new course began in March with 22 individuals enrolled. The requests for Discovery services are increasing due to the interest being generated from the successful and much lauded Career Counseling Information and Referral courses conducted throughout Florida. Discovery provides a seamless transition to Supported or Customized Employment.

November 2016-

To meet WIOA mandates, VR is working with providers to develop a Career Counseling and Information and Referral Service that will be available for use with individuals who are participating in subminimum wage employment. The service will provide information on competitive integrated employment and the supports that are available to assist individuals who might wish to be referred for Supported Employment services. The service will also include strategies to introduce individuals to Self-Advocacy, Self-Determination, and peer mentoring training opportunities that are available in their local area.

Career
Counseling /
Information and
Referral Services

January 2017-

VR has designed a process for providing Career Counseling Information and Referral Services (CCIR) for individuals who are participating in subminimum wage employment. Applications are currently being accepted and processed for agencies interested in becoming a CCIR provider. This training will provide information of interest regarding competitive integrated employment options and will also share information on the supports that are available should individuals wish to explore other employment options. VR will provide CCIR training twice per year for individuals new to subminimum wage employment and annually thereafter. A training session was provided for VR field staff to ensure they were aware of the new law and understood VR's role in compliance. VR has also hosted training opportunities for a variety of provider groups such as: The ARC of Florida, Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, and VR Providers.

May 2017-

As of the end of this quarter, there are approximately 30 registered CCIR providers in Florida and approximately 1,000 individuals participated in this training opportunity across the state between January and March 2017. It is anticipated that 2,000-2,500 additional individuals will participate in CCIR training prior to June 30, 2017. Reviews of the training from trainers, participants, and entities has been quite positive thus far. Planning for the 2017-18 state fiscal year is currently underway.

August 2017-

During SFY 2016-17, 4,432 individuals participated in Career Counseling, Information and Referral Courses. Currently, applications are being processed and approved for 2017-2018. It is anticipated that approximately the same number of individuals will be served during the current year.

November 2017-

During SFY 2016-17, 4,780 individuals received training. This is higher than what was reported in the August update as we received some additional billing after the report was provided.

There are currently 21 agencies approved to provide CCIR services and 315 individuals have participated in CCIR training since July 2017. Classes are being conducted upon request by 14 (C) agencies who provide subminimum wage employment. We anticipate that we will serve approximately 5000 individuals during this fiscal year.

VR is working with its partners (providers, families, individuals, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, and others as appropriate) to develop a process for effective follow up for individuals who express an interest in working after having had the opportunity to participate in CCIR training.

Additionally: VR is continuing to provide extensive technical assistance and support to a variety of internal and external stakeholders who need assistance in understanding and

complying with the requirements of Section 511 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

January 2018-

VR continues its work with a variety of partners to provide CCIR Services to individuals who are participating in subminimum wage employment. VR has had a positive response to the services from the individuals participating, the providers, and the 14 (C) employers. Staff supporting individuals in subminimum wage employment have indicated that the customers have gained knowledge and that the support staff have learned more about providing informed choice to the individuals they serve.

VR is implementing an orientation to agency services, follow up process for individuals who indicate they are interested in VR services during their participation in CCIR training.

May 2018-

Career Counseling Information and Referral courses continue to be offered across Florida for individuals who are working in subminimum wage settings. In the most recent round of trainings, 3000 individuals have completed CCIR courses (as of March 30th, 2018). VR is working with CCIR providers, 14 (c) employers, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, and Ticket to Work staff to conduct collaborative and informational sessions to assist individuals in planning for life beyond 14 (c) employment. Three sessions were conducted last quarter and VR plans to offer more of these informative sessions in the new state fiscal year.

November 2016-

VR is currently working to develop contracts for innovative and expansive pilot projects in VR Areas 2, 3, and 4. These pilot projects are aimed at improving the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services, particularly those delivered to individuals with unique abilities.

January 2017-

Contracts have been developed for innovative and expansive pilot projects in VR Areas 2, 3, and 4. These pilot projects are slated to begin in the spring and are aimed at improving the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services, particularly those delivered to individuals with unique abilities.

May 2017-

Contracts have been executed for innovative and expansive pilot projects in VR Areas 2, 3, and 4. Two additional contracts for pilot projects in VR Areas 3 and 5 have been developed and are currently being routed for approval, with an anticipated start date of July 1, 2017. These pilot projects are aimed at improving the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services, particularly those delivered to individuals with unique abilities.

Innovation and
Expansion
Projects

August 2017-

The two additional contracts for pilot projects in VR Areas 3 and 5 have now been executed. These pilot projects are aimed at improving the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services, particularly those delivered to individuals with unique abilities.

November 2017-

Contracts are now in place for pilot projects in VR Areas, 2, 3, 4, and 5. These pilot projects are aimed at improving the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services, particularly those delivered to individuals with unique abilities.

January 2018-

All of the Pilot Projects are underway and successfully improving the effectiveness of Vocational Rehabilitation Services throughout the state. Projects are described below.

The Business Center for Diversity and Inclusion (BCDI) – Operated by The Diversity Initiative, Inc. (TDI)

TDI is providing a “no fee” Business Center provides consultation, development, training, and support services to local businesses and organizations to facilitate employment placement for individuals with unique abilities. The BCDI serves Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Hernando counties.

The Arc-2-Work: a work-skills training program – Operated by Arc of Alachua County

The Arc-2-Work program is providing pre-employment training and participation in volunteering positions to high school students and clients of the Arc that will foster employment placement for individuals with unique abilities in Alachua County.

The Industry Readiness Training (IRT) Program – Operated by Brevard Achievement Center

The IRT Program is providing pre-employment training and participation in volunteering positions that will foster employment placement for individuals with unique abilities in Brevard County.

Discovering Your Potential (DYP) – Operated by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc.

The DYP Program is providing highly focused, intensive discovery, training, and support to individuals with unique abilities in order to increase employment outcomes in Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Okeechobee counties.

Discovering Your Potential (DYP) – Operated by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries, Inc.

The DYP Program is providing highly focused, intensive discovery, training, and support to individuals with unique abilities in order to increase employment outcomes in Palm Beach County.

May 2018-

All of the Pilot Projects are underway and are successfully improving the effectiveness of Vocational Rehabilitation Services throughout the state.

Vendor Profile
Project and
Interim Profile

January 2017-

The Employment Services Vendor Profile is a temporary solution as the previous vendor profile project was tabled and our VR counselors needed access to information related to the available ES providers in their respective VR areas. This information can be accessed via VR I-Net. VR HQ Staff is currently updating the information received from the Employment Services providers.

May 2017-

A charter for the Vendor Profile Project has been developed and approved, as well as requirements for the project. The next steps are programming the Vendor Profile. The Interim Profile will continue to be used until the new Vendor Profile is finalized.

August 2017-

The VR Service Provider Choice Directory (aka Vendor Profile) is anticipated to be launched in August 2017. Orientation webinars for providers and staff were held in July. This Directory will be available via www.Rehabworks.org.

November 2017-

Usage Statistics for Website: <http://ChoiceDirectory.Rehabworks.org> (external)

Date Range: September 1st, 2017 – September 24th, 2017

Total number of Visit During this Date Range: 19,729

Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: 271,595

Usage Statistics for Website: <http://it-in-web-01/vendorprofile> (internal)

Total number of Visit During this Date Range: 516

Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: 1,192

January 2018-

Usage Statistics for Website: <http://ChoiceDirectory.Rehabworks.org> (external)

- Date Range: October 1st, 2017 – December 30th, 2017
- Total number of Visit During this Date Range: ~114,132
- Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: ~1,544,497

Usage Statistics for Website: <http://it-in-web-01/vendorprofile> (internal)

- Date Range: October 1st, 2017 – December 30th, 2017
- Total number of Visit During this Date Range: ~ 3,442
- Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: ~ 6,309

May 2018-

The Service Provider Choice Directory is working without issues. Vendor Registration staff is entering the new profile/locations for every new ES providers and updating existing ones as requested. Some of the ES providers have reached out to find out if they could include other services they are registered to provide to VR clients. Requests for TA on the demographic side of the SPDC has decreased, and contacts now are mainly to update information.

Usage Statistics for Website: <http://ChoiceDirectory.Rehabworks.org> (external)

- Date Range: January 1st, 2018 – March 31st, 2018
- Total number of Visit During this Date Range: ~121,781
- Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: ~1,643,000

Usage Statistics for Website: <http://it-in-web-01/vendorprofile> (internal)

- Date Range: January 1st, 2018 – March 31st, 2018
- Total number of Visit During this Date Range: ~ 12,592
- Total Number of Pages Viewed by Visitors: ~ 15,459

Provider
Capacity

August 2017 (new topic)-

Provider Type	SFY 2016	SFY 2017	Percent Increase
Discovery	78 Certified	96 Certified 33 in Courses	23% Increase
Customized Employment	19	27	42% Increase
CBTAC	50	64	28% Increase
Project SEARCH Sites	21	32	52% Increase
TPCA	24 Districts 32 Empl. Spec.	20 Districts 29 Empl. Spec.	20% Increase
STAR Participating Districts	27	53	96% Increase

November 2017-

Provider Type	SFY 2016	SFY 2017	SFY 2018 (thru Q1)
Discovery	78 Certified	96 Certified 33 in Courses	102 Certified 49 Course pending* *19 from Summer; *30 for Fall
Customized Employment	19	27	29
CBTAC	50	64	64 & 13 in fall course
Project SEARCH Sites	21	32	31
TPCA	24 Districts 32 Empl. Spec.	20 Districts 29 Empl. Spec.	25 Districts 39 Empl. Spec.
STAR Participating Districts	27	53	56

January 2018-

Provider Type	SFY 2016	SFY 2017	SFY 2018 (thru Q2)
Discovery	78 Certified	96 Certified 33 in Courses	103 Certified 36 Course pending* *4 from Summer; 32 for Fall
Customized Employment	19	27	29
CBTAC	50	64	65 & 13 finishing fall course
Project SEARCH Sites	21	32	32
TPCA	24 Districts 32 Empl. Spec.	20 Districts 29 Empl. Spec.	25 Districts 39 Empl. Spec.
STAR Participating Districts	27	53	58

May 2018-

Provider Type	SFY 2016	SFY 2017	SFY 2018 (thru Q2)
Discovery	78 Certified	96 Certified 33 in Courses	103 Certified 36 Course pending* *4 from Summer; 32 for Fall
CBTAC	50	64	68 Certified
Project SEARCH Sites	21	32	32
WBLE	24 Districts 32 Empl. Spec.	20 Districts 29 Empl. Spec.	25 Districts 39 Empl. Spec.
STAR Participating Districts	27	53	59

Topic 4. Public Awareness of VR- Overview

<p>FRC Recommendation Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media campaign to share the history of VR, Florida specific services, successes and accomplishments • Accessible online application system • Engaging businesses as mandated partners
<p>VR Response</p>	<p>VR acknowledges the need to better promote and market the valuable services it offers to jobseekers with disabilities. VR welcomes recommendations on documents and information needed in other languages, and the specific languages needed.</p> <p>VR has engaged in multiple discussions with FRC about an online application. VR agrees that an accessible, online application would be valuable and has already started researching this option. However, WIOA modifications to case management and other IT systems have priority at this time. As VR has previously relayed to FRC, the online application will be further researched and discussed once WIOA modifications are complete.</p>
<p>Strategic Linkages</p>	<p>FRC Strategic Link Goal 2- To establish and strengthen partnerships</p> <p>2016 VR Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Link Goal 10- Increase the division's effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by section 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</p>

Topic 4. Public Awareness of VR- Updates

Transition & Pre-ETS Service Materials

November 2016-

A new STAR webpage has been developed which includes STAR program information and links to the new Transition Youth brochure which is offered in English, Spanish, and Creole. STAR Program Training materials have been developed for school districts which will provide Program information, review STAR roles and responsibilities, and assist with the access of and navigation within the STAR Referral portal. VR has also created a new brochure that explains both the traditional and new STAR program for students and their parents. A web page in the transition section of rehabworks.org also has links to the information about the program http://rehabworks.org/stw_star.shtml.

January 2017-

A 2 minute STAR introduction video has been produced and is being vetted for eventual roll out on RehabWorks.org with additional transition program videos to follow.

May 2017-

A STAR introduction video is complete and posted on the VR homepage as well as the STAR web page. The STAR Program team also developed and distributed a STAR 11x17 poster to be delivered to the local schools for them to post on their student bulletin boards to further promote the program with the new brochure.

August 2017-

STAR posters have been completed and distributed to Areas. STAR banners have been developed and are being printed and distributed. The VR Newsletter announcement that was sent to ESE Directors in the spring, will be sent out again this summer to include in Start of the Year Announcements. Local VR staff are beginning to coordinate with LEAs to schedule times for VR staff to speak to LEA staff about VR including Pre-ETS, STAR, and the VR Application/eligibility process. Local VR staff are coordinating with LEA staff to participate in School/Community events such as New Student Orientation, Open House, etc.

November 2017- (no update)

January 2018-

All of VR's Transition materials, STAR, and STAR training materials are being revised to reflect the RSA 911 age change and additional Pre-ETS. These revisions are being made in a collaborative effort between PDA, LDO, and Communications.

May 2018-

All electronic and hard copy resources and materials are being revised to simplify key concepts and streamline information, making the information easier for students and their families to understand.

November 2016-

Florida VR is fully participating in the FL Department of Education (DOE) leadership team that prepares the strategic plan for the State Board of Education. The VR Director and bureau chief for the Bureau of Planning and Performance, as well as other VR subject matter experts participate in identification of goals, measures, and activities that support the larger DOE goals. The DOE Goal Leaders team has been meeting on a weekly basis throughout October to finalize the plan, and the plan is expected to be completed prior December, 2016. VR has three key activities that support the DOE plan: 1) Implement WIOA, 2) Implement the VR Works! program, and 3) Expand programs serving VR youth transitioning into the workforce.

January 2017- No new updates

May 2017-

Florida VR continues to fully participate on the DOE leadership team by providing monthly updates in the SBOE plan application. Identification of measures and activities is complete and activity leaders in Field Services and the Bureau of Program Support and Assistance are identified. The activity leaders keep track of activity progress and report to the Commissioner at regularly scheduled meetings if necessary (based on a self-assessment of activity progress). VR has three key activities that support the DOE plan: 1) Implement WIOA, 2) Implement the VR Works! program, and 3) Expand programs serving VR youth transitioning into the workforce.

August 2017-

Florida VR continues to fully participate on the DOE leadership team by providing monthly updates in the SBOE plan application. The current activities that support the plan continue to be managed and reported in regularly scheduled meetings, as mentioned above in the May, 2017 update. In the most recent meeting, DOE Commissioner Pam Stewart indicated that the strategic focus for the Department of Education in the coming year was to close the achievement gap between racial groups throughout the state. VR senior leaders attended meetings with the Chancellor of K-12 to share preliminary ideas on how VR can work with the schools to close achievement gaps. Those meetings will continue as needed to complete the development of ideas and activities, and the SBOE plan will be updated accordingly.

November 2017-

Based on the Commissioner's priorities, VR has three proposals for the DOE Strategic Plan:

- Implement VR Works! Program: VR Works! is a 'back to basics' initiative which will allow better management of customer expectations of VR services and clarify the customer and counselor role in the rehabilitation process. This is based on an 'employment first' philosophy that uses labor market information and other tools to accelerate placement in competitive, integrated employment.
- Strengthen the connection between the educational opportunities VR provides to customers and in-demand careers: VR will begin the process of transitioning from approving training programs only at the college/university level to approving

training programs on the CareerSource Eligible Training Provider Lists. By using predominantly ETPL training provider programs, VR can be assured that the careers people are trained for are needed in the local community based on labor market data and economic considerations.

- Increase engagement with counties identified as having the largest achievement gaps for students with disabilities who are also African American: VR will conduct an analysis of education and VR data to determine where achievement gaps between students with disabilities and students who are African American intersect. Based on the analysis, VR will develop or enhance strategies, in collaboration with related partners, to expand or create new service delivery models, outreach activities, or other activities to increase achievement of African American students with disabilities.

January 2018- (No updates)

May 2018- (No changes)

November 2016-

VR held four (4) Disability Employment Awareness Events this year, Miami on September 29, Tallahassee on October 5 (statewide), St. Petersburg on October 21, and Lakeland/Winter Haven on October 26. Each event honors outstanding employers who have hired VR customers. We had great turnouts this year with a number of past honorees coming back to help this year's employers celebrate their successes. The Able Trust sponsored the food at the Tallahassee and Lakeland/Winter Haven events. The Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront sponsored the room, the coffee, and the refreshments this year.

January 2017-

VR held four Disability Employment Awareness Events 2016, one statewide event and three local events. The statewide event, held in conjunction with APD, the Division of Blind Services, and CareerSource, was held on Wednesday, October 5 and honored 10 Exceptional Employers. Four Outstanding Employers were honored for their commitment to hiring people with disabilities at the 2016 Disability Employment Awareness Celebration in Miami, FL on September 29. Local dignitaries and Vocational Rehabilitation honored CosmoProf, FedEx, NBC Universal Telemundo, and Whole Foods South Beach. The Disability Employment Awareness Celebration in St. Petersburg, FL, honored outstanding employers who hire people with disabilities. This year, VR honored AMC Theatres, Crown Automotive Group, Dunbar Armored, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, and Sacino's Formalwear & Cleaners. Four Outstanding Employers were honored for their commitment to hiring people with disabilities at the 2016 Disability Employment Awareness Celebration in Lakeland, FL on October 26. Local dignitaries and Vocational Rehabilitation honored Steak 'n Shake, Especially 4U Catering and Restaurant, Lake Morton Plaza, and Panera Bread.

May 2017- No new updates

Disability
Employment
Awareness
Events

August 2017-

VR will have three events this year, the statewide event, held in Tallahassee at City Hall, is scheduled for Wednesday, October 4, the event in St. Petersburg will be held at the Hilton Bayfront on Friday, October 6, and the Miami event will be held on Friday, October 20 at the Hilton Airport. Honorees are being chosen this month.

November 2017-

The DEAC events in Tallahassee and St. Petersburg went well and the DEAC in Miami is scheduled for October 20.

TLH- We will honor our 2017 Statewide Disability Employment Award Winners - Boca Raton Resort and Club, Cunningham Pest Control in Boca Raton, Dosatron of Clearwater, Embassy Suites Ft. Lauderdale, Martin Health System of Stuart, Planet Fitness Panama City, Piggly Wiggly Quincy, Publix and Sodexo.

St. Pete- VR will honor FBD Signs, Inc., HSN (Home Shopping Network), Jabil, Mister Car Wash, and Professional Surveys, Inc. (PSI).

Miami- VR will honor Discount Welds, Marshalls, Misha's Cupcakes, SMS International Shores, The Port of Miami, and Tropic Ocean Airways

January 2018-

The DEAC events in Tallahassee, St. Petersburg and Miami went well with record attendance. We are looking at expanding these events to other VR areas in the upcoming year.

May 2018-

Planning is already underway for the St. Petersburg DEAC event. It will be held on Friday, October 5 at the Bayfront Hilton, St. Petersburg. Planning for other DEAC events will begin in June 2018.

Annual Report /
Legislative
Profiles

November 2016-

Links to OPPAGA Government Program Summary (GPS) page provide an overview of FL agencies and programs, with further helpful links to program specific resources-
<http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/government/agencys.aspx>
<http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/profiles/2127> (VR Specific)

January 2017-

The 2015-2016 Annual Report was completed by December 31, 2016. This year's report was a joint effort between the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC) and VR.

The SFY 2015-16 statewide legislative profile was created by the Office of Strategy Management for distribution by FRC members to state legislators and congressmen with the VR/FRC annual report and informational brochures about the VR program.

May 2017- No new updates

August 2017- No new updates

November 2017-

The annual report and legislative profile are in process, with drafts being reviewed by VR and FRC staff.

January 2018-

The 2016-2017 Annual Report was completed by December 31, 2017. This year's report was a joint effort between the Florida Rehabilitation Council (FRC) and VR.

The SFY 2016-17 statewide legislative profile was created by the Office of Strategy Management and Communications Office, for distribution by FRC members to state legislators and congressmen with the VR/FRC annual report and informational brochures about the VR program.

May 2018-

The VR Communications staff has already begun planning the layout and design for the SFY 2017-18 joint VR/FRC annual report.

The SFY 2017-18 statewide legislative profile will be created by the Office of Strategy Management and Communications Office, for distribution by FRC members to state legislators and congressmen with the VR/FRC annual report and informational brochures about the VR program.

Topic 5. Counselor Recruitment, Retention- Overview

<p>FRC Recommendation Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop VR leadership candidates as well as an agency-wide workforce succession management plan • Identify new ways to recruit employees while implementing long-term retention strategies • Revisions to the new employee training program and an increased number of course offerings in the learning management system (LMS) • Advocacy curriculum
<p>VR Response</p>	<p>WIOA provides more flexibility in counselor education and credential requirements, which is anticipated to expand recruiting opportunities. VR will be able to hire candidates with business or related backgrounds who also have experience working with people with disabilities. Leadership Development and Succession Management projects are intended to increase VR employee retention while providing valuable professional development. Advocacy components are included in VR counselor training currently, and it is the understanding of VR that the FRC will develop additional content related to advocacy so that it can be delivered through the TED learning management system.</p>
<p>Strategic Linkages</p>	<p>FRC Strategic Link Goal 1- To enhance the effectiveness of VR services</p> <p>2016 VR Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Link Goal 1- Decrease the average wait list time for reportable individuals Goal 10- Increase the division's effectiveness in serving employers, based on indicators developed as required by section 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</p>

Topic 5. Counselor Recruitment, Retention- Updates

VR Mentoring Program

November 2016-

From June to July 2016, a series of webinars provided VR staff information on the new mentoring program, how to use the system, and setting up personal profiles. This concluded with a Mentor / Protégé Matching Day. The Mentoring Program officially kicked off on August 1st. The VR Organization and Employee Support Section (OES) is available via the Mentorship Program Help Desk email to assist with any Mentorship program questions, and IMAP software assistance.

Participation Numbers (as of Oct. 2016)-

- 182 Total Mentors (84 supervisors & 98 non-supervisors)
- 170 Active Mentors (81 supervisors & 89 non supervisors)
- 12 Inactive Mentors (3 supervisors & 9 non supervisors)
- 61 Total Subject Matter Experts
- 59 Active Subject Matter Experts
- 2 Inactive Subject Matter Experts

January 2017-

To date there have been 21 completed mentorships since the roll out of the program, with 125 in-progress mentoring relationships, and 37 individuals pending assignment to a mentor during the past quarter. There are 189 mentors in the program, including 59 subject matter experts. The average delay for a supervisor to assign a mentor is 107 calendar days.

May 2017-

To date there have been 131 protégés listed as in-progress status, and 29 individuals pending assignment to a mentor during the past quarter, down from 37. There are 208 mentors in the program, as well as 73 subject matter experts. The average delay for a supervisor to assign a mentor is 50 calendar days.

The Program Administrator has been auditing the program, identifying supervisors who have not registered as mentors. A list was sent to the Human Resource Development Section to register these supervisors in the Mentorship Program Mentor/SME Required Training in TED. A recurring problem has been that a significant number of mentors are not utilizing the protégé progress logs. Without entries on the progress log, there is no record that mentoring has occurred. The Program Administrator has been contacting these mentors reminding them to make progress log entries.

August 2017-

We are nearing the one year anniversary of the launch of Mentorship Program and IMAP. We are creating a survey to get some feedback about the program. Chuck is still monitoring the program and assisting as needed. The progress logs are still underutilized.

November 2017-

Participation Numbers as of September 2017

224 Total Mentors (105 supervisors & 217 non-supervisors)

209 Active Mentors (98 supervisors & 111 non-supervisors)

15 Inactive Mentors (7 supervisors & 8 non-supervisors)

75 Total Subject Matter Experts

70 Active Subject Matter Experts

4 Inactive Subject Matter Experts

The Program Administrator worked with HRD to create a survey for users of the Mentorship Program to try to ascertain the reason behind some these issues. The results of that survey are currently being analyzed.

January 2018-

Participation Numbers as of December 2017

232 Total Mentors (106 supervisors & 126 non-supervisors)

216 Active Mentors (99 supervisors & 117 non-supervisors)

15 Inactive Mentors (7 supervisors & 8 non-supervisors)

78 Total Subject Matter Experts

74 Active Subject Matter Experts

4 Inactive Subject Matter Experts

May 2018- (No update)

Succession
Planning &
Leadership
Development

November 2016-

As of October 2016, 35 Field Services employees are enrolled in the Supervisor Succession Training Program (SSTP) with another 15 comprised solely of supervisors, enrolling in January 2017. The program has successfully gone from a pilot to a full-fledged part of VR's overall Leadership Development program. Based upon current evaluation feedback, both employees and their supervisors have acknowledged the benefits of the training and its positive impact upon operational effectiveness and efficiency. Participants must go through a rigorous application and selection process and feel valued by being in the program; thereby boosting morale.

The VR SSTP uses currently available resources to train the widest demographic possible. The program is delivered by an online format through the use of a nationally known online learning management system hosted by National Seminars. The program consists of four levels that require completion within a 12-month timeframe. The program ends with graduation after completion of an estimated 50 hours of professional leadership development training provided to each participant.

The Work Demonstration Exercises and After Action Reviews give participants an opportunity to use the skills they have developed in training with their peers and supervisors. Further, because the training is online, it can be taken around the employee's work schedule, does not incur the costs associated with travel to on site locations, although that is available subject to supervisor's approval, or take time away from the office/customers. VRHQ staff have provided 3 presentations on the SSTP program- National VR Summit, FSU CPM graduation, and N FL CPM chapter.

January 2017-

The program has successfully gone from a pilot to a full-fledged part of VR's overall Leadership Development program and has been deemed the division's official supervisor training program by VR leadership. As of January 2017, 44 Field Services employees are enrolled in the program. This includes one group comprised of 12 supervisors. Due to the success of the program, it has been opened on a limited basis to VR HQ staff for a total of 50 participants.

The SSTP HQ Program Administrators will be making a presentation to the FRC at the end of January. Numerous internal updates have been given to VR leadership regarding participant progress and overall program integrity.

May 2017-

The SSTP program continues to be very successful with buy-in from VR Senior Leadership in Tallahassee and the Field. Three participants have graduated from the program ahead of schedule. Other program statistics are as follows:

- 10 of 14 (71%) of our Group 1 participants have received National Seminars STAR12 - First Time Supervisor Professional Certification. 3 of 14 (21%) have completed all the online training requirements for the full program.
- 7 of 19 (37%) of our Group 2 participants have received National Seminars STAR12 - First Time Supervisor Professional Certification.
- 1 of 16 (6%) of our Group 3 participants needs to complete just three more modules and will then receive their National Seminars STAR12 - First Time Supervisor Professional Certification.
- 18 of 49 (37%) participants have received their First Time Supervisor Professional Certification.
- 3 of 49 (6%) have successfully graduated from program.

August 2017-

VR's Supervisor Succession Training Program (SSTP) development team, Lucy Mohs, Fred Wollet, Lee Chipps-Walton, Terence Farrell, and Chris Weldon received a Prudential Productivity Award on June 14, at an honorary luncheon in Tallahassee. They were recognized for their innovative work in developing the division's latest employee training program.

As of July 2017, 48 Field Services employees are enrolled in the SSTP program.

- 28 of 48 (58%) participants have received their First Time Supervisor Professional Certification.
- 5 of 48 (10%) have successfully graduated from the full program.

SSTP Program Administrators Lucy Mohs and Fred Wollet were selected to present at the national VR summit located in Nebraska, Omaha during September on the program's effectiveness and return on investment.

November 2017-

Supervisor Succession Training Program (SSTP) is moving to statewide implementation.

As of October 2017, 25 VR employees have graduated from SSTP, and 27 employees are currently enrolled.

January 2018-

SSTP will start another group of participants in January 2018. As of 12/18/17, 32 participants have graduated from SSTP, and 14 employees are currently enrolled.

May 2018-

Nineteen new SSTP participants (Class IV) started their training at the beginning of February. Currently 44 employees have access to National Seminars STAR 12 learning management system and available tools and resources for use as needed in daily operations.

Performance
Expectations
Revamp

May 2017- (new topic)

Under WIOA, VR services have a focus on long-term careers, not just jobs, which necessitates the revamping of VR field operations. Following the evaluation of responses to the ONE-VR survey, a new initiative has been launched to revise performance expectations for VR field staff, recognizing that VR employees need to be more involved in making decisions about their jobs. Following the launch of this initiative, the project team held a workshop with a group of Area Staff in Ocala to determine the mission-critical tasks of each position. Using this information, the team is currently drafting new performance expectations for the 2017-18 performance evaluation period to ensure evaluations are clearly tied to what field staff do in their jobs and provide flexibility to customize performance evaluations within a field unit. These drafts will be sent to the Area Staff who attended the workshop in Ocala for review and feedback before they are finalized, and supervisors will be trained on the final expectations at Statewide Supervisors Training in May.

August 2017-

VR held a workshop with employees in each classification in March to discuss their job duties and what they think they should be evaluated for. The same exercise was held with supervisors, Area Supervisors and Area Directors in May after SST. HQ staff have been compiling and refining expectations and are currently finalizing the rubrics. The expectations will then go out for a final review by the workshop participants. These new expectations will be effective for the 2017 – 2018 performance evaluation year.

November 2017-

The Performance Expectation Revamp has been completed and new expectations are effective 10/1/2017.

January 2018- (Operational; no update)

May 2018- (Operational; no update)

FITS (Field IT
System Help
Desk)

November 2016-

FITS is **currently operational** (no future updates). It is being used to manage requests for enhancements to VR applications (RIMS, REBA, TED, etc.). It is also a tool that allows staff to report issues with VR applications. It has helped VR staff identify reoccurring issues and to share information about known issues. The system is being revised by the VR IT staff on periodic basis to make it more useful to all staff.

November 2017-

FITS usage as of 10/12/17:

Action : In Progress (13)

Action : Not Started (1)

Action : Referred to IT (124)

Action : Resolved and Documented (436)

Action : Resolved by IT (627)

Fieldback usage as of 10/12/17

95 members

69 discussions

107 replies

January 2018-

FieldBack Usage Information:

What's happening

- 101 members
- 102 discussions
- 139 replies

May 2018- (No Update)

Learning and
Development
Office

November 2016-

The Learning and Development Office (HRD) has been working closely with VR leadership, program staff, and key field staff in the development of training programs for the following projects:

- STAR Program
- VR Works!
- RSA 911
- New Counselor Training (NCT)

Many of these training programs are being designed in a variety of blended learning formats to enhance learner interaction, experience, and retention (e.g., self-paced online training, job aids, fact sheets, VR Newsletter, live webinars, recorded webinars, podcasts, face-to-face, etc.) In addition, HRD is working closely with program staff to post program specific information and resources on VR's SharePoint site for employees to have easier access to information.

January 2017-

In addition to the STAR Program, VR Works, RSA-911, and New Counselor Training (NCT), TED trainings are now being developed for VR Employee Orientation and DOE Mandatory Training (currently under course maintenance reviews).

May 2017-

The Learning and Development Office continues to work on the following long-term projects: the STAR Program, VR Works!, RSA 911, and New Counselor Training, as well as webinars, permanent training solutions and resources for: Self-Advocacy Service, and Customized Employment Services, as well as providing webinar support for the Florida Rehabilitation Council quarterly meetings. LDO is also providing support pre-event and on site for the Statewide Supervisor Training event in May, and continues to work with DOE on five mandatory course maintenance revisions.

August 2017-

The Learning and Development Office is working on these ongoing long-term projects: the STAR Program, VR Works! RSA 911, Quality Assurance, New Counselor Training, and New Employee Orientation. They have provided webinar support and permanent training solutions for the Service Provider Choice Directory and continue to provide webinar support for the FRC quarterly meetings, as well as the Third Party Cooperative Arrangements (TPCA) program. LDO also provided consultation and support for face-to-face workshops to revise VR staff performance expectations. LDO is following up with DOE on five mandatory course maintenance revisions.

November 2017-

The Learning and Development Office is working on these ongoing long-term projects: the STAR Program, RSA 911, Quality Assurance, New Counselor Training, and New Employee Orientation. LDO is supporting the rollout of VR Works through developing and delivering training materials beginning in October and developing a comprehensive program evaluation plan. LDO continues to provide webinar support for the FRC quarterly meetings and the TPCA program, as well as Project SEARCH.

January 2018-

The Learning and Development Office continues their work on New Employee Orientation, Quality Assurance, RSA 911, and New Counselor Training. Efforts will be focused in 2018 on Pre-Employment Transition Services (STAR, TPCA, Peer Mentoring, Supported Employment, Project SEARCH) as well as Deaf and Hard of Hearing training modules. LDO has provided webinar support for quarterly FRC meetings, Pre-ETS programs and RSA 911. VR Works training in each Area continues and will conclude in early February.

May 2018-

The Learning and Development Office continues their work on RSA 911, Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) training and New Counselor Training. Mandatory training in the areas of Sexual Harassment Prevention, Ethics, Diversity and

Workers Compensation were deployed, as well as a set of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Population modules. Pre-ETS training is being developed for various audiences (VR staff, school districts and Providers). VR Works training concluded in early February and we are currently developing VR Works training for Providers. A VR Works presentation is being prepared for the upcoming FRC meeting.

The Project Support team (aka Business Analysis Team) has provided business analysis support and user acceptance testing support to the RSA-911 Data Collection effort, as well as, project implementation and communication support to various work units and leadership. Further, the team has redesigned case transfer process and supported the implementation which is expected to result in improvement in the continuity of services for customers during time of relocation, etc. The Business Analysis team continues to evolve field services management support structure by facilitating communication with field leadership and support for improving customer facing processes.

Topic 6. Mediation and Conflict Resolution- Overview

<p>FRC Recommendation Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote conflict resolution strategies including mediation prior to formal appeals • Separate methods of reporting conflict resolutions to stakeholders
<p>VR Response</p>	<p>VR has already agreed to report Dispute Resolution data in the manner requested by FRC. Additional measures taken by VR to alleviate this concern include multiple discussions and reviews of dispute resolution practices by FDOE legal counsel, presentation by and open discussion with legal counsel during the August quarterly meeting, and adding a series of survey items to the customer satisfaction survey that further identify customers’ knowledge of options available if they do not agree with VR decisions about services.</p>
<p>Strategic Linkages</p>	<p>FRC Strategic Link Goal 1- To enhance the effectiveness of VR services</p> <p>2016 VR Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Link Goal 1- Decrease the average wait list time for reportable individuals</p>

Topic 6. Mediation and Conflict Resolution- Updates

Self-Advocacy Training

November 2016-

Self-Advocacy Training is a service that has been identified as a Pre-Employment Transition Service in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and will be offered to Recipients of STAR services, Transition Youth, and will be made available to youth who have exited school as needed and where there is VR Provider capacity to deliver the services. A Self-Advocacy Training series has been developed for individuals who require knowledge and skills to speak up for themselves and make decisions that affect their lives. This series is comprised of two (2) product-driven courses that are designed for individuals to gain self-awareness about their skills, abilities, needs and interests, then be able to effectively communicate them to potential employers.

Course 1 may be used as a standalone program. Course 2 is a continuation where self-determination is addressed and skills learned are applied to a real-life setting. Extension activities provide opportunities for individuals who require more intensive support to complete their course deliverables.

January 2017-

Curriculum and referral templates for both Self-Advocacy Training courses has been developed and approved, and the Self-Advocacy Training project is now being programmed in the information management system so VR Staff may refer, authorize, and pay for this new service. In addition, service fee codes have been developed to aid in programming.

May 2017-

The Self-Advocacy Training Curriculum is currently being programmed by IT, with an anticipated program roll out in May. Training for all stakeholders is being developed and will begin the week of April 18th, 2017.

August 2017-

- TED Training on the Self-Advocacy Training complete. There are only 47 VR Staff left to complete the 4 modules
- Materials are being developed for VRi-Net to provide support and TA for field staff. A "Field" back link will also be made available to staff.

Provider training is complete. Recording of the training is available on RehabWorks.org Vendor Resources. 130 individuals have taken the post-assessment. As vendors complete the assessment successfully, Pre-ETS Applications are being sent out by Vendor Registration.

November 2017-

VR i-Net Resource Page is up and running. Over 200 providers have taken Self-Advocacy Training post-assessment and are in the process of becoming approved.

January 2018-

Self-Advocacy Training service TED and Rehabworks trainings are being updated to reflect RSA 911 age change. The service is now being offered to STAR Participants and VR Customers throughout the state. There are currently 63 vendors and 220 individuals approved to provide Self-Advocacy Training service.

May 2018-

Requests from providers for VR Self-Advocacy Training services have increased. This can be attributed, in part, to the work VR staff have engaged in to help make students, families, and transition stakeholders aware of the benefits of participating in Pre-ETS. We currently have 283 individuals qualified to provide the Self-Advocacy Training service. This service is also now being offered in Residential DJJ facilities as this is a need previously unmet by these facilities.

VR Works!

November 2016-

The VR Works! Program is currently putting together a team to develop the VR Works! training and determine how VR Works! will be rolled out statewide.

January 2017-

The VR Works! Program has put together a team of two administrators to develop training and coordinate the VR Works! statewide rollout. In February, the administrators are going to meet with the Area 4 Leadership Team where VR Works! was piloted to discuss how the program has made a difference in case-work and outcomes. During this meeting, the statewide committee who will be working on this project will be finalized.

The administrators seek to integrate RSA-911 reporting data points into the VR Works! Program so all data will be compatible with the new case management program. Possible policy changes, data collection elements and timeframes for being able to change RIMS templates will be discussed in the coming quarter.

May 2017-

The VR Works! program is moving forward. The program team has finalized documents and sent them out to Area 4 & 2 to use for 30 days. The training committee has been determined and the training manual is being updated that will be ready for use to begin the training in Area 1 in July. The team will bring the training to the areas one by one and will complete the training for the entire state by end of this calendar year.

August 2017- No update

November 2017-

VR Works! is underway. We have our first Area Wide Training in Area 6 next week and thereafter an aggressive training schedule to train over 900 employees state wide concluding in February, 1018.

January 2018-

VR Works is on the move and we have trained more than half the state. We began the training in Miami, Area 6, on October 23rd to the 26th. November 7th & 8th Area 5 was trained and Area 1 staff were trained from November 14th to 17th. Area 7 was trained from December 4th to the 7th. January 8th to the 12th we will be training all of Area 3. Area 2 is scheduled for training on January 22nd to the 26th. We complete our state wide training in the month of February. On February 5th to the 9th Area 4 will received their training. We are scheduled to complete the training with HQ staff on February 20th.

Following the last day of the area training every area was given 30 days to implement the VR Works program in their area. During this time the areas were given the time to practice utilizing the new materials, arrange for and practice the Orientation. They also developed the Orientation schedules for each office.

We have scheduled follow-up training with each area to conduct a Webinar with an open call with staff for feedback regarding any problems they may have experienced and answer any questions they may have regarding the use of the new materials.

So far the feedback from the field staff has been very positive and in the areas where they have gone live with using the VR Works tools we have not heard anything other than how much this program is helping the staff do a better job.

The VR Works team has worked very hard on this project and need to be commended for how much time and energy this roll out has taken. I could not be any more proud of the final product and the effort from the team that went into making this project a success.

May 2018- (Operational; no update)