

**Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**  
**Proposed 2009 State Plan Update**  
**May 19, 2008**

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## PREFACE

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) is required on an annual basis to provide the Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA) with a report on their program goals and priorities, otherwise known as the State Plan. While the Plan is written on an annual basis, the goal and priorities are developed every three years and relate to the tri-annual needs assessment that OVRs conducts in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

The contents of the Plan are prescribed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998. It requires that we provide a description of our progress on the goals and priorities of the prior year; that we describe the goals and priorities for the coming year; and that we address a number of technical requirements. The goals and priorities, which we have chosen to call objectives, are what we consider to be the Plan. These goals and objectives will guide the work of OVRs over the next three years. You will find them detailed in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and 4.11(d) which begin on page 45.

OVRs, in partnership with the SRC conducted a needs assessment in 2008. This along with the Client Needs Assessment conducted by the SRC in 2008; the preliminary findings of the revenue conducted by RSA in January 2008, the 2008 State Plan and the strategic plan of the Competitive Employment Project/Medicaid Infrastructure Grant informed the development of the 2009 State Plan. OVRs central office staff and field services managers provided additionally input into the plan.

This year OVRs opted to change the format of the goals and objectives, Attachment 4.11(c)(1). The Plan now contains five broad goals, incorporating the goals of the 2008 State Plan and the Comprehensive Needs Assessment findings. Each goal has associated objectives, formerly priorities, and strategies. Outcome measures have been developed for each goal. OVRs sees these as targets to guide its work and evaluate its effectiveness. The outcomes link directly to the federal Standards and Indicators on which OVRs must report annually. While not required, RSA has encouraged state programs to move in this direction. The goals and objectives in OVRs' plan also align with RSA draft strategic plan.

The staff of OVRs would like to express its appreciation of the SRC, and particularly the members of the State Plan workgroup, for the time, energy and collaboration they brought to the development of this plan.

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**ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(1)**  
**Cooperation with Agencies that are not in the**  
**Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities**

In addition to its partnerships with other members of Oregon's workforce investment system, OVRS works in partnership and cooperation with other Department of Human Services (DHS) divisions and offices, other state and local governmental agencies and programs, and numerous non-governmental organizations. Key among these are those outlined below.

**Developmental Disabilities Partners and Programs**

Oregon's developmental disability system includes:

- The Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODD) of the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Division (SPD) of DHS. The Employed Persons with Disabilities Program, Oregon's Medicaid "buy-in" program, is also a part of SPD.
- County operated and funded developmental disability and case management programs.
- Nongovernmental developmental disability service brokerages and service providers.
- The Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities, which advises the governor and policymakers about serving persons with developmental disabilities.

OVRS continues to regularly interact with this system on case-by-case basis and administratively.

OVRS field staff work closely with case managers, support brokerages and others in assisting client with developmental disabilities in obtaining the developmental

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disability services and supports clients need to obtain, maintain and advance in employment.

OQRS also works closely with Oregon's developmental disabilities service system on a state-level:

- OQRS is represented on the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities (OCDD).
- SPD is a partner in OQRS' Oregon Competitive Employment Project (OCEP) and represented on its member of OCEP's Leadership Council. OCEP is Medicaid Infrastructure Grant-funded initiative that seeks to address systemic barriers the competitive employment of persons with disabilities.

OQRS/OCEP underwrote the first year of SPD/OHCS' participation (July 2006-June 2007) in the Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a national initiative that seeks to renew and refined state developmental disability supported employment efforts. More recently, OQRS/OCEP joined the SPD work group responsible for implementing the strategic plan SPD developed as an outcome of their work with SELN

- OCEP supports the Developmental Disabilities Task Force, a workgroup on supported employment for individuals with developmental disabilities. The task force, established by OCDD, the Oregon Technical Assistance Center and other disability advocates, serves as a forum on employment of persons with developmental disabilities.

### **Mental Health Partners and Programs**

OQRS works closely with Oregon's mental health system in serving and supporting persons with psychiatric disabilities, making and accepting referrals for services, and addressing systemic concerns and issues related to employment of persons with psychiatric disabilities. The system includes the Addictions and Mental Health Division (AMH), county mental health programs and private mental health service providers.

In addition to interacting with the mental health system on behalf of individual clients, OVRs is working with the system on a number of initiatives, including supported employment. Since 2000, OVRs has collaborated with AMH and over a dozen county mental health programs in seeking to develop and sustain supported employment services for persons with psychiatric disabilities. OVRs present and continuing efforts in this area include:

- Pooling funding resources with AMH to provide interim funding for existing evidence-based supported employment programs.
- Providing MIG-funded mini-grants and contracts to interested county mental health systems for the infrastructure, technical assistance and training needed to implement evidence-based supported employment.
- Contracting with mental health programs to provide evidence-based supported employment services OVRs clients.

In addition:

- AMH and a community-based mental health program are represented on OCEP's Leadership Council.
- OCEP has and continues to work closely with AMH staff in carrying out its initiatives.

### **Primary and Higher Education Organizations and Programs**

OVRs partners, collaborates and interacts with many different primary and higher education agencies, organizations and programs. For more on these partnerships see Attachment 4.8(b)(2).

**State Independent Living Council, Independent Living Centers and Public and Private Advocacy Programs**

OVRs interacts with Oregon's State Independent Living Council and eight Centers for Independent Living in a number of capacities and on both a systems and direct services level. For instance:

- OVRs Administrator is an ex-officio member of SILC, while SILC's Director is a member of the Leadership Council of the OVRs/OCEP, and a member of the SILC sits on the State Rehabilitation Council.
- OVRs field offices and CILs routinely interact with one another in making and accepting referrals of individual needing employment or independent living services and supports: they often collaborate in sponsoring or organizing job fairs, benefits planning fairs and other events for individuals with disabilities, their families and supporters.

In addition, OVRs has a cooperative agreement with SILC that allows OVRs to increase the overall amount of 110 grant funding available in Oregon through utilizing state general funds allocated to SILC as match. The agreement provides a \$10,000 annual allocation to each of the OVRs branches to purchase employment-related independent living services from local Centers for Independent Living (CILs) for OVRs clients. The expanded match is also providing SILC with the resources to collaborate with OVRs and OCEP in implementing a statewide work incentives and benefits planning network, known as the Work Incentives Network or WIN. See Attachment 4.11(e)(2) for more on OCEP and WIN.

OVRs has a continuing and productive working relationship with the Oregon Advocacy Center, Inc. (OAC), Oregon's rights protection and advocacy systems for persons with disabilities. OAC is responsible for administering Oregon's Client Assistance Program and the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program (formerly the Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach Program), in addition to the other rights protection and advocacy programs. OVRs field and administrative staff interact regularly with CAP and other OAC staff in order to

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address and resolve client issues and concerns, and to respond to formal client disputes. OVRS staff routinely refer individuals in need of advocacy assistance to OAC. OVRS' administration and CAP staff meet on a quarterly basis to address recurring and systemic concerns.

OAC is an active member of OCEP and represented on OCEP's Leadership Council. OAC's WIPA Program partnered with OCEP in developing a plan for a comprehensive and sustainable benefits planning and work incentives system for Oregon, and the two programs are collaborating in implementing of OCEP's Work Incentives Network (WIN). The two systems compliment one another; WIN addresses many of the gaps and limitations on work incentives and benefits planning in Oregon.

OVRS has working relationships with numerous other public and voluntary advocacy organizations and groups, including the Oregon Parent Training and Information Center, the Arc of Oregon, Easter Seals of Oregon, United Cerebral Palsy of Oregon, the People with Disabilities Advisory Committee and the Adult Services Advisory Committee.

### **Social Security Administration**

OVRS works with the Social Security Administration and Maximus in filing "tickets" for OVRS clients and pursuing reimbursement for provision of Ticket-reimbursable services. In FFY 2007, OVRS created and filled a Ticket to Work Coordinator position. The coordinator is responsible for coordinating OVRS' Ticket-related functions and activities, including utilizing anticipated changes in Ticket regulations to assist OVRS in expanding the availability of supported employment services in Oregon.

### **Workers Compensation Division**

The Workers' Compensation Division (WCD) of the Department of Consumer and Business Services is the Oregon agency responsible for regulating Oregon's workers' compensation system, and administering the Employer at Injury Program (EAIP) and the Preferred Worker Programs, which provide various incentives to employers who rehire or hire injured workers.

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OVRS has an ongoing working relationship with WCD and Oregon's workers' compensation system. OVRS provides vocational rehabilitation services to injured workers whose workers' compensation claims are not or are no longer compensable. Since 2006, OVRS has operated a project in conjunction with WCD's Preferred Worker Program in Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington Counties that assists injured workers eligible for Preferred Worker Program benefits in obtaining and utilizing those benefits.

OVRS does not currently collaborate with Oregon programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development.

**Technical Assistance, Training and Continuing Education Programs**

OVRS collaborates with and utilizes the services of Western Washington University Continuing Education Rehabilitation Center, the designated Disability Business Technological Center (DBTAC) for Region 10. OVRS also collaborates with the Oregon DBTAC representative housed at the University of Oregon.

**Oregon Competitive Employment Project**

In 2005, OVRS was awarded a four-year Medicaid Infrastructure Grant by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid to develop a more comprehensive, inclusive and integrated system of employment-related services and supports for Oregonians with disabilities. The resulting effort, known as the Oregon Competitive Employment Project (OCEP), involves a multitude of partners on a number of initiatives. In 2007, OVRS/OCEP allies and supporters included:

- Addictions and Mental Health Division/Oregon Department of Human Services
- Brain Injury Association of Oregon, Inc.
- Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development
- Department of Transportation
- Employment Department
- Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network
- Oregon Advocacy Center

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- Oregon Business Leadership Council, Inc.
- Oregon Commission for the Blind
- Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Oregon State Independent Living Council
- Oregon Parent Training and Information Center
- People with Disabilities Advisory Council
- Seniors and People with Disabilities Division/Oregon Department of Human Services
- Social Security Administration
- Veterans Administration
- Worksystems, Inc.

**Cooperative Relationships with Other Organizations and Groups**

OVRS has working relationships with many other organizations, programs and groups, including those with which OVRS contracts, utilizing innovation and expansion and other funds, to provide services to OVRS clients.

**ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(2)**  
**Coordination with Education Officials to Facilitate the  
Transition of Students with Disabilities from School to  
Receipt of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs) recognizes youth as a priority service group and through a number of programs and processes actively works in coordination with state and local education officials to facilitate transition of students with disabilities.

**Youth Transition Program and Career Workforce Skills Training Program**  
Since 1990, OVRs has operated the Youth Transition Program (YTP). Through YTP, high school youth are provided with a comprehensive array of services to prepare them for employment or career related post secondary education or training.

YTP is a partnership between OVRs, public school districts, the Department of Education and the University of Oregon. OVRs is responsible for overseeing and coordinating YTP; providing YTP contracts to school districts selected through a competitive process to participate in YTP; working with school district staff at the field and school level to provide YTP services; and providing training and technical assistance. The school districts, which enter into intergovernmental agreements with OVRs to provide YTP services and meet specified outcomes, provide the services outlined below. In addition, the school districts provide a one-third match for their OVRs YTP grants. The Department of Education (DoE) and the University of Oregon provide additional training and technical assistance.

Students participating in YTP:

- Are enrolled in a school district's high school or alternative program, although eligible youth who have left school prior to graduation may be included;

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- Are or have been entitled to services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or are receiving disability-related accommodations under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act; and,
- Are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

YTP services begin while the student is in high school, generally at age 17 or 18, and continue for at least one year after the student's completion of secondary school requirements or departure from school for other reasons. YTP grants provide funding for transition specialists, school district employees who work year round with OVRS counselors to provide:

- Individualized career and transition planning, focused on post school goals and self determination, and help to coordinate plans with relevant adult agencies;
- Paid job training while in the program and assistance to secure employment or enter post secondary education upon leaving the program;
- Follow up services after program completion to track progress and provide additional supports as needed.

When a student is selected to participate in the YTP program, it is expected that he or she will work with an OVRS counselor to develop an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) which reflects the interest, strengths, and abilities of the student as well as addresses the potential barriers to the training or employment outcomes.

In FFY 2006, OVRS, participating school districts and the University of Oregon served more than 1,406 students through the Youth Transition Program. Of these students:

- 1,393 were in vocational rehabilitation application status and 885 had Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE).
- 74 percent of those who exited YTP were either employed in a post-secondary educational or training program or a combination of the two.

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- 284 or 60 percent of the 474 who exited the program were employed upon exit and were working an average of 33 hours per week at an average wage of \$8.51 an hour.
- 264 of the 284 employed at exit were employed six months later and were working an average of 32 hours a week at an average wage of \$8.66 an hour; and 233 of the 284 continued to be employed 12 months later and were working an average of 34 hours a week at an average wage of \$9.31 an hour.

Since September 2002, OVRS has had a full-time youth transition program (YTP) coordinator. This position is responsible for leading and coordinating OVRS' Youth Transition Program (YTP) and serving as OVRS' liaison to the Department of Education (DoE), the Oregon university system and the state's secondary education system and schools on transition issue. The YTP coordinator is a member of the State Advisory Council on Special Education and its Transition Advisory Committee. The coordinator also works closely with Oregon's community colleges and foster care, youth and workforce programs on transition and related service coordination issues. On a related basis, the DoE has a secondary transition specialist and this position is a member of the State Rehabilitation Council, OVRS' policy making partner.

The YTP Coordinator, DoE's secondary transition specialist and the University of Oregon's technical assistance advisors jointly provide training to secondary schools and OVRS staff on transition issues and collaborating with one another.

In addition to the YTP coordinator, OVRS designates one counselor in each of its field offices as its transition resource specialist. Through these specialists, OVRS has staff available to work on transition cases and issues with every school district in the state.

Since 1999, OVRS has also promoted youth transition through its Career Workforce Skills Training (CWST) Program. This program, originally known as the Occupational Skills Training/Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services partnership, is carried out by a number of Oregon's community colleges under

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cooperative agreements with OVRs. The purpose of the CWST Program is to assist OVRs clients with disabilities of all ages in acquiring occupational skills and entering career-related employment. CWST is based on individualized instruction for up to 12 months at a worksite, based on an occupation specific curriculum. Students earn college credits for work-site based training at an approved community-training site. In addition, students can take related college courses as a part of their CWST training. The CWST Program's "value added" services are particularly attractive to youth who have difficulty learning in the traditional classroom-based environment. The CWST Program is coordinated by the YTP Coordinator.

Between July 1, 2005 and March 31, 2007, four CWST Program sites served 382 OVRs clients. As a result of this partnership, 52 clients completed the program and obtained "vocational certificates; 155 clients entered employment; and 128 maintained employment for 90 days; and, 188 continued in services.

OVRs continued to operate the Youth Transition Program and Career Workforce Skills Training Program throughout FFY 2007, as described above. In relation to these programs, the agency carried out the following additional noteworthy activities.

- OVRs and DoE negotiated a new YTP cooperative agreement for the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009. The agreement outlines OVRs and DoE's responsibilities and commitment to working collaboratively in assisting students with disabilities in transitioning from public education to post-secondary career-related training and employment. The agreement also specifies OVRs and local education agencies responsibilities for delivering transition-related services and commitment to ensuring that the transition students' IPEs are completed prior to students leaving the school setting.
- OVRs negotiated new cooperative agreements for the provision of YTP services with 38 school districts, educational service districts (ESDs) and consortia, which represent a total of 114 high schools. The cooperative

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agreements are for a two year period that began on July 1, 2007 and will conclude on June 30, 2009.

- The YTP Coordinator joined the Modified Diploma Taskforce, a group of professionals and educators that is responsible for writing administrative rules for curriculum and graduation outcomes for youth with disabilities.
- OVRs negotiated new two-year CWST Program cooperative agreements with Chemeketa, Clackamas and Rogue Community Colleges. The agreements are for a two year period, which began on July 1, 2007 and will end on June 30, 2009.
- OVRs negotiated a new two-year interagency agreement with the University of Oregon to provide training, technical assistance and evaluation activities to high school YTP and community college CWST Programs. The agreement is for same two year period as other YTP and CWST agreements.

All YTP and CWST agreements with high schools and community colleges contain service and performance requirements. OVRs' decisions about awarding and renewing agreements are based on agency performance and available funding.

**Other Transition Coordination Activities with Education Officials**

OVRs and the Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB) established a formal statewide cooperative agreement with all 17 of Oregon's community colleges in 2005. This agreement, which runs from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2009, promotes collaboration and linkages through regional teams comprised of community college, OCB and OVRs representatives. This framework provides an ongoing forum for the exchange of information about issues of common concern, policy issues and process improvements to further the goals of the agreement.

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The cooperative agreement's goals include a commitment to:

- Work together to assure that qualified and eligible students with disabilities have full access to educational opportunities.
- To understand, acknowledge, and respect the differing requirements and definitions among the partners for such terms as eligibility, documentation of disability, confidentiality (including protected documents within each of our systems), provision of services, and accommodations based on the differing missions of the partners.

In 2005, OVRS and OCB negotiated a cooperative agreement with the Oregon University System (OUS), similar in purpose and scope to the OVRS agreement with the 17 community colleges. The OVRS, OCB and OUS agreement runs through June 30, 2009. Under the terms of the agreement:

- There is a standing systems cooperative work group. The work group facilitates implementation of the agreement, evaluates its effectiveness, recommends needed policy change and facilitates provision of related training.
- Each university disability services office and OCB and OVRS field office has a designated liaison responsible for participating in regional meetings with the community college(s) in their area and exchanging information, fostering collaboration and addressing unique needs and issues.
- OVRS, OCB and OUS are jointly responsible for:
  - Ensuring access to reasonable accommodations for OCB and OVRS clients enrolled in OUS institutions.
  - Providing opportunities for counselors and institutional disability services representatives to interact and be informed about administrative and accommodative functions and issues.

In order to carry out its responsibilities under these cooperative agreements, OVRS designates a staff member (the YTP coordinator) to serve as its primary

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contact with the community college and university agreements. This staff member coordinates regional team membership and meetings, and documents regional and local issues and needs and concerns, including those related to training. This information is carried forward to the Core Group/Interagency Cooperative Work Group for discussion and resolution.

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**ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(3)**  
**Cooperative Agreements with**  
**Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers**

OVRs has cooperative or contractual relationships with private, nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers for a number of purposes.

OVRs, utilizing its authority to fund services to groups, sub-contracts with nonprofit organizations to provide a service or set of services to a specific group or groups of individuals. The sub-contracting process begins with OVRs branch managers, who meet with nonprofit organizations and others interested in providing services to OVRs clients. In turn, branch managers forward their nominations to OVRs' administration, which reviews them and makes the final selection. In recommending and selecting proposals, the following criteria are utilized:

- Addresses gaps in services identified by OVRs' needs assessment.
- The number and quality of competitive job placements.
- The wages earned by consumers.
- The number of small business/self employment outcomes.
- The number of partnerships with state and local workforce investment boards, and private sector employers.
- The program capacity for people with disabilities through partnerships with employers, schools and community agencies.
- The number of employment partnerships with tribal entities, African-American, Hispanic and Asian populations.
- The diversity of people served, staff, and service providers.
- The quality of customer service.
- The use of technological tools that enhance performance.

OVRs also works with nonprofit organizations on a fee-for-service basis. Initially, these agencies (and other vocational rehabilitation service providers) must apply to OVRs to be placed on an approved vendor list. This process is similar to a

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request for qualification process. Approvals for the vendor list extend for two years, at which time an updated application is required.

Providers are broken in two groups based on whether the provider is already licensed or certified by another state agency. Group A providers are those providers already licensed by another state agency. Group B represent the providers who are not.

- Group A consists of providers of:
  - Medical, psychiatric, psychological, social, and vocational services (provided under one management).
  - Testing, fitting, or training in the use of prosthetic and orthotic devices.
  - Recreational, physical, occupational, speech, language and hearing therapy.
  - Psychiatric, psychological and social services, including positive behavior management.
  - Psychosocial rehabilitation services.
  - Personal assistance services.

In order to remain on OVRs' approved vendor list, these providers are required to maintain compliance with the relevant licensing and certifying body, and comply with other applicable state standards.

- Group B consists of providers of:
  - Assessments for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs.
  - Rehabilitation technology.
  - Job development, placement, and retention services.
  - Evaluation or control of specific disabilities.
  - Orientation and mobility services.
  - Extended employment services.
  - Supported employment and extended services.

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These providers are required to:

- Provide proof of insurance (at the level established by Department of Administrative Services' guidelines).
- Clear any DHS-required criminal history check.
- Submit a signed statement of assurances and conditions that current and future services to individuals with disabilities will be provided in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, rules and standards; and in a safe environment.

OVRs maintains a statewide data system (ORCA), which contains basic information on approved providers/vendors. This information is available to OVRs field staff when assisting clients in making informed choices about providers/vendors.

OVRs' authorization for purchase of services, combined with its statement of assurances and conditions, describes the roles and responsibilities of all parties, and identifies the scope of services and expected outcomes. In addition, Oregon administrative rules require all providers/vendors to:

- Fully inform OVRs clients of the purpose and results of all service delivery efforts made on their behalf.
- Recommend clients only to appropriate, previously agreed upon employment opportunities.
- Meet service commitments.
- Provide OVRs with the appropriate written documentation in order to secure payment for services rendered.
- Maintain and adhere to applicable confidentiality requirements, standards and agreements.
- Be respectful, inclusive, and accommodating of OVRs clients regardless of a client's disability.

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Approved providers/vendors are prohibited from:

- Engaging in or tolerating sexual harassment of any kind toward a consumer e.g., deliberate or repeated comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature.
- Violating any applicable state or federal civil rights law.
- Committing fraud, misrepresentation, or make a serious error or omission in connection with an application for authorization or billing statement.
- Engaging in collusion to withhold information, or submit false or misleading documentation in order to generate payment.
- Engaging in collusion to violate these rules or other OVRS rules.
- Instructing any individual to engage in behavior contrary to the requirements of OVRS rules.
- Engaging in any behavior or comments likely to cause public embarrassment to OVRS consumers.

**ATTACHMENT 4.8(b)(4)**  
**Evidence of Collaboration Regarding**  
**Supported Employment Services and Extended Services**

**Services to Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities**

OQRS continues to collaborate with the Addictions and Mental Health Division, Oregon's state mental health authority, an increasing number of county mental health programs and private, non-profit mental health programs in developing, providing and evaluating evidence-based supported employment services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

OQRS' collaborative activities in this area occur on a "systems" level, as OQRS and AMH seek to extend the availability and quality of mental health supported employment services on a statewide basis; while OQRS branches and county mental health programs work collaboratively at the field level in providing supported employment services to individual clients.

OQRS and AMH have actively worked to develop evidence-based supported employment services for individuals with psychiatric disabilities since 2000. Initial efforts involved collaborating with Tualatin Valley Centers, a community mental health provider in Washington County and North Portland, Cascadia in Multnomah County and Options for Southern Oregon, a community mental health provider, in Jackson, Douglas and Polk counties. Dartmouth College provided needed training, technical assistance and evaluation. A grant from the Dartmouth-Johnson & Johnson partnership provided grant funding to develop additional sites utilizing evidence-based supported employment and ongoing technical assistance.

OQRS and AMH's efforts have accelerated since 2005, with the establishment of the Oregon Competitive Employment Project (OCEP), a systems change initiative administered by OQRS and funded by a four-year Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG). In its first grant year (January 2005-December 2005), OCEP identified expansion of supported employment to persons with psychiatric disabilities as one of its eight objectives.

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In FFY 2007, OVRS, OCEP and AMH continued collaborative activities begun in 2006, including:

- Provision of MIG mini-grants to mental health programs in Deschutes, Josephine, Malheur, Marion and Washington in order to assist these programs in planning, providing and evaluating evidence-based supported employment services, and obtaining needed technical assistance on supported employment.
- Provision of funding for evidence-based supported employment training events and mini-conferences. Over 70 mental health and vocational rehabilitation providers from seven counties participated in events that were held in 2007.
- Continuation of arrangements with Options of Southern Oregon to provide training and technical assistance on supported employment to other mental health programs.
- Provision of interim funding to Options and Life Works Northwest systems with training and technical assistance and provide supported employment services.

OVRS, OCEP and AMH also:

- Continued to partner with Dartmouth College's Psychiatric Center in evaluating and analyzing evidence-based supported employment services in Oregon.
- Developed a "Center for Excellence" on evidence-based supported employment. The center, which has since become operational, provides leadership, training and technical assistance on supported employment.

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- Collaborated on a strategy to provide evidence-based supported employment services to non-Medicaid eligible indigent individuals with a mental health diagnosis.

In addition to these system initiatives, OVRS continued to provide “innovation and expansion activity” funding to county mental health programs to assist them in providing supported employment services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities in seeking, obtaining and advancing in employment. These services entail:

- Participation of the client and the client’s mental health counselor or case manager and vocational rehabilitation counselor in development of a client’s IPE and formulation of the clients’ employment goals.
- Provision of needed mental health services and supports, while OVRS provides the client with job development, on-the-job training and job placement services.
- Provision of needed mental health services and supports, after the client is employed and OVRS involvement has ended.

OVRS also contracts with Bareis Educational Services in Central and North Portland to assist homeless individuals with mental health issues in stabilizing their lives and preparing for employment.

### **Services to Persons with Developmental Disabilities**

OVRS continues to partner with the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Division (SPD), its Office of Developmental Disabilities Services and others, including support service brokerages, county case managers, rehabilitation providers and advocates in providing supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities. The OVRS Workforce Programs Manager is an active member of the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities.

The OVRS/SPD partnership on both the state and local levels was strengthened as a result of the Staley settlement, which entitles eligible adults living at home to

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purchase an array of services through support brokerages. These services are designed to assist living situations to remain stable, as well as provide access to community work and activities, including supported employment.

From 2005 through the present, OVRS/OCEP and SPD have participated in the Developmental Disabilities Task Force, which is led by the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Oregon Technical Assistance Center and is comprised of self-advocates, providers, family members, educators, and other stakeholders

Since 2006, OVRS/OCEP has supported funded SPD's participation in the Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN). SELN is a national state initiative that seeks to renew and expand state supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities. SELN is sponsored by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services and the University of Massachusetts' Institute for Community Inclusion.

Initially, OVRS/OCEP's support was financial but in 2007 OVRS/OCEP joined the work group responsible for implementing SPD's SELN strategic plan. On a related basis, OVRS and SPD have explored how to expand and sustain the Work Incentives Network, the benefits and work incentives systems that OVRS/OCEP is developing, and the two agencies might best use Ticket to Work to provide long term supports to persons with developmental disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment.

### **Other Collaborative Activities and Developments**

Also in FFY 2007:

- OVRS continued to consult with SPD and AMH about OCEP's Work Incentives Network (WIN), as OCEP moved from planning to implementing WIN.
- OVRS, SPD, AMH continued to explore how to implement the long anticipated new Ticket to Work regulations in Oregon and best use the

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regulations and Ticket revenue provide long term support services to persons with developmental and psychiatric disabilities.

- OVRs and allied DHS programs and their counterparts from four other states participated in a two-day state-federal policy exchange organized by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Policy. Federal participants included representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Labor, Health Resources and Services Administration, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Social Security Administration and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. State and federal partners shared strategies for increasing employment, retention and promotion of workers with disabilities and recommended future federal policies, resources and priorities that would support a competitive employment infrastructure.
- OVRs/OCEP and the Brain Injury Association of Oregon (BIAOR) continued their joint efforts to address the limited availability of supported employment services for persons with acquired traumatic brain injuries (TBI) in Oregon:
  - OVRs/OCEP collaborated with BIAOR in developing a briefing paper on a TBI supported employment model.
  - OVRs purchased from "Brain Injury Recovery Kits" from BIAOR for three of its branch offices.
  - OVRs/OCEP co-sponsored the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Pacific Northwest Brain Injury Conference.
  - OVRs/OCEP worked with BIAOR to establish a registry that will accurately track the number of individuals in Oregon that acquire or sustain a TBI.

## **ATTACHMENT 4.10**

### **Procedures and Activities Regarding the Establishment and Maintenance of a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development**

OQRS is a program office within the Children, Adults and Families Division of the Department of Human Services (DHS). OQRS is the designated state unit within DHS. Human resources or personnel functions are a part of DHS' consolidated Administrative Services Unit.

During this annual update period, DHS and OQRS, like other units of state government with significant number of retirements, continue to face changes and challenges that impact our Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD).

The current status of OQRS' comprehensive system of personnel development and future plans are addressed as follows:

#### **Data System on Personnel**

The Oregon legislature has the sole authority to set the number of state government positions, including the number of OQRS positions. The number and type of full time equivalent (FTE) OQRS positions providing direct client services are:

- 119 vocational rehabilitation counselors
- 66 human services assistants and office specialists
- 14 field managers
- 3 district office business managers

In the pool of 119 vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs), OQRS has 11 VRC specialist positions. The counselors in these positions provide training, technical assistance and caseload support to other field staff, in addition to carrying a general caseload.

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All OVRS field staff are provided with the supervision necessary to ensure that the position is providing the level of direct services or support services deemed necessary. A minimum of 20 hours of in-service training per OVRS employee per year has been established as a staff development performance benchmark. The in-service training grant provides OVRS with the resources to achieve that benchmark. Managers meet annually with staff to address professional development needs for the upcoming year. Strategies for building the skills of managers in this area are included in the in-service training plan.

In FFY 2006, OVRS served 18,104 Oregonians with disabilities; and, in FFY 2007, OVRS served 16,306 Oregonians with disabilities. In FFY 2006, the ratio of VRCs to clients served was 1 to 151; and, in FFY 2007, the ratio was 1 to 137.

The present and projected staffing level and configuration meet currently identified needs.

#### **Data about Education**

OVRS currently has 85 VRCs with Master's degrees, and 31 with Bachelor's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field.

Oregon has two institutions of higher education with graduate programs in Rehabilitation Counseling, Western Oregon University (WOU) and Portland State University (PSU).

Western Oregon University (WOU) has two Rehabilitation Counseling degree options:

- The Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD), which was established in 1974 and is one of three deafness specialty programs in the United States. Students in this program plan to seek employment as counselors or consultants for culturally deaf people, recently deafened individuals and persons who are hard-of-hearing. The RCD option is available up to 10 new students a year.

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- The Rehabilitation Counselor (RC), which was authorized by the Oregon University system in 1991. Graduates of this option provide counseling and consultative services to the general population of persons who have disabilities. Entering students must be able to document two to three years of work experience and/or volunteer experiences with persons who have disabilities. The RC option is available up to ten new students a year.

Portland State University (PSU) offers:

- A Master of Science/Arts Specialty in Rehabilitation Counseling. PSU's Department of Special Education and Counselor Education provides students with a balanced program of academic course work and supervised clinical field experience in rehabilitation settings. Students specializing in rehabilitation counseling are provided with both the theoretical background and the practical skills that will enable them to function as rehabilitation counselors in a variety of settings. The course work can be completed on either a full- or part-time basis. PSU accepts up to 10 new students a year.

Washington has one institution of higher education that offers graduate education in rehabilitation counseling, Western Washington University (WWU), which provides two options:

- A Seattle-based option for Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Some courses are available on a classroom basis, while others are available through the internet. This option is designed for those within driving distance of WWU.
- A Certificate in Disability Management.

Idaho also has a related graduate program. The University of Idaho, Counseling & School Psychology program offers a program of study leading to either a Master of Education or a Master of Science in Counseling and Human Services, with an emphasis in Rehabilitation Counseling. The Rehabilitation Counseling emphasis is

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a blend of academic and field-based course work with an emphasis on supervised practicum and internship experiences in a variety of human service agencies.

In FFY 2007:

- Three OVRs' VRCs earned Master's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling, respectively from Portland State University, Western Oregon University and Southern University. In addition, another OVRs VRC earned a Master's degree in Social Work from Portland State University.
- A staff member in a developmental position performed very well and, in doing so, met the minimum requirements to be a VRC. The staff member was subsequently hired as a VRC. Another VRC was placed in a developmental branch manager position and was subsequently promoted into a branch manager position on a permanent basis. A third VRC worked in an out-of-class lead worker position for several months.
- Seven VRCs with Master's degrees were hired. Three of these individuals are graduates of WOU's Rehabilitation Counseling for the Deaf (RCD) Program; one is a graduate of WOU's Rehabilitation Counseling (RC) Program; and, three have Master degrees in other related disciplines, including Education and Social Work.
- OVRs paid the registration fees for three staff to take an online, eight-week CRC exam preparation workshop, offered by University of Wisconsin-Stout. All three completed the workshop, took and passed the CRC exam, and were subsequently granted CRC status.

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OQRS has:

- 38 VRCs with current CRC status.
- 43 VRCs with Master's degrees in a related field who need additional course work and/or clinical supervision in order to obtain their CRC certification.
- 3 VRCs without undergraduate degrees.

In FFY 2009, OQRS will continue to:

- Work with Portland State University, Western Oregon University, Western Washington University and other education programs that provide opportunities for staff to meet our CSPD requirements.
- Assist staff in obtaining CRC certification by paying for the registration fees for taking online CRC exam preparation workshops.

### **Recruitment and Retention**

OQRS continues its commitment to increase the diversity of its workforce in conjunction with DHS' long-term plan to ensure that diversity goals are identified, supported, and achieved. During FFY 07 OQRS continued to actively participate and is continuing to participate in DHS' Diversity Development Coordinating Council.

OQRS continues to work closely with the graduate rehabilitation counseling programs at WOU, PSU and elsewhere in order to increase recruitment of minority applicants.

OQRS continues to actively partner with PSU and WOU's Rehabilitation Counseling Programs to create additional opportunities for graduate student internships. OQRS has initiated an internship stipend program aimed at encouraging a diverse pool of potential applicants for vocational rehabilitation

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counselor positions across the state. Stipends are offered, dependent on budget availability. Should the number of applicants outnumber the available stipends, OVRS will award stipends based on its recruitment needs. Interagency agreements between OVRS and universities offering graduate degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling are developed and implemented prior to disbursement of funds. At present, OVRS is targeting the two universities in Oregon who offer rehabilitation counseling degrees, but may elect to open the project to regional or national scope at a later date. WOU was the first program to participate in the project, which initiated in January 2007.

OVRS continued its involvement with the Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program's "Recruitment Project", which is examining staffing needs of vocational rehabilitation systems in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Alaska. This collaborative effort has developed regional recruitment information for state agencies, including information to disseminate via websites. The Recruitment Project is developing regional marketing strategy for different populations, including youth, members of Generation X and Y, second career workers and others.

OVRS has worked within DHS' web content guidelines to keep its pages up to date and available for potential job applicants, potential consumers and other members of the public. OVRS has and continues to participate in CSAVR VR-NET.

In order to replace staff that are expected to retire or resign over the next three to five years, OVRS is projecting that it will need to hire approximately 43 additional

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VRCs, 23 additional Human Services Assistants/Office Specialists, six additional Field Managers and three District Office Business Managers, as illustrated in the chart below.

Type of Staff	Additional Staff due to Increased Individuals Served	Additional Staff due to Projected Retirements	Total
VR Counselors	0	43	43
Human Service Assistants and Office Specialists	0	23	23
Field Managers	0	6	6
District Office Business Managers	0	3	3

OVRS projects that it will be serving approximately 16,000 individuals annually at the end of five years and that approximately 13,280 or 83 percent will be individuals with significant disabilities. The projected retirements are based on the number of staff who will either reach age sixty-five or have thirty years of service with the State of Oregon within the next five years.

**Personnel Standards**

OVRS continues to utilize an established set of standards to evaluate and select vocational rehabilitation counselors. These standards are based on a modified version of standards utilized by the Workers' Compensation Division (WCD). The State of Oregon's vocational rehabilitation counselor classification is shared by WCD, the Oregon Commission for the Blind and OVRS. It requires that counselors possess:

1. A Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling; or be certified by either the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), the Certified Insurance Rehabilitation

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Specialist (CIRS), or the Certification of Disability Management Specialists Commission as a Certified Disability Management Specialist 1 (CDMS), and six months full-time work experience providing vocational rehabilitation-related services; OR

2. A Master's degree in Psychology, Counseling, or a field related to Vocational Rehabilitation (such as one that promotes the physical, psychosocial, or vocational well-being of individuals with disabilities) and 12 months full-time work experience providing vocational rehabilitation-related services, OR
3. A Bachelor's degree in a related field, such as one that promotes the physical, psychosocial, or vocational well-being of individuals with disabilities, and three years of full-time work experience providing vocational rehabilitation-related services to individuals with disabilities. There is no direct experience substitute for a Bachelor's degree.

OQRS has had as a goal that employees classified as Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) will hold a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a closely related field by 2010. There is now recognition that there will be insufficient graduates from the nation's training programs to meet the goal of hiring counselors with master's degrees. In this region, two Rehabilitation Counseling educational programs have lost federal RSA funding – one in Idaho and one in Oregon. Although the Oregon program is still operating, the loss of funding has reduced the incentives for graduates to seek employment with OQRS; and only two funded programs remain, WOU and WWU.

OQRS has experienced difficulties in recruiting qualified staff in the more rural areas of the state, where it is often difficult to find candidates with Bachelor's degrees. In addition, recruitment and retention of staff with Master's degree is challenging because state wages for vocational rehabilitation (VR) professionals in Oregon are not competitive with wages for VR professionals in the private sector in Oregon, and wages for VR professionals in neighboring states.

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OVRS will meet its CPSD standard by the end of FFY 2010. OVRS's current standard establishes a Bachelor's degree in a related field, such as one that promotes the physical, psychosocial, or vocational well-being of individuals with disabilities, and three years of full-time work experience providing vocational rehabilitation-related services to individuals with disabilities. There is no direct experience substitute for a Bachelor's degree as the minimum standard. However, when possible, OVRS hires individuals with Master's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling.

OVRS has been advised by the Service Employees International Union, which represents OVRS' counselors, of its intent to litigate any personnel standards that would discharge, demote or displace any counselor with acceptable performance solely on the basis of a degree requirement.

OVRS is committed to providing the most effective services with the best-qualified staff possible. OVRS will continue to offer and support professional development opportunities for staff. In response to these current realities, OVRS proposes the following changes to its CSPD plan:

- OVRS will continue to seek counseling staff with Master's degrees.
- VRC candidates with an appropriate Bachelor's degrees and related work experience but without Master's degrees may be hired as an exception to the policy, with approval of OVRS' Administrator.

### **Staff Development**

In 2005, OVRS received a five-year In-Service Training Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The current five-year In-Service Training Plan of OVRS developed as a requirement of the In-Service Training Grant is designed to:

- Address the recruitment and retention of qualified rehabilitation professionals.

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- Provide succession planning.
- Develop leadership and build capacity.
- Provide training on the Workforce Investment Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as reauthorized in 1998, including its regulations and related policy.

The In-Service Training Program assists OVRS in carrying out the mission of the State/Federal rehabilitation service program of increasing employment outcomes for people with disabilities through informed choice and career development. OVRS uses a series of processes to identify training needs. These include two formal needs assessment processes and an informal, continuing process:

- A periodic training needs assessment. The assessment was completed in FFY 2007 and the next one will be done in FFY 2008. (The results of the 2007 training needs assessment were incorporated into the below referenced comprehensive needs assessment).
- A three-year comprehensive statewide needs assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Oregonians with disabilities. A new needs assessment was completed in 2007 (and is reported on this State Plan Update; see Attachment 4.11(a)). The next needs assessment will be carried out in 2010. The 2007 needs assessment was carried out in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).
- Continuing assessment of training needs through informal processes, including feedback from OVRS managers and staff, SRC, and clients, and information obtained through case file reviews.

During FFY 2007, OVRS continued to expect that all staff participate in appropriate professional development activities. The established benchmark is a minimum of 20 hours of training per employee per year.

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A key staff development activity for OVRS in FFY 2007 was the office's annual statewide in-service training conference. Utilizing in-service training grant funds, OVRS utilizes this comprehensive staff training event to increase staff technical skills, as well as to showcase best practices. The FFY 2007 In-Service Training Conference was conducted on August 7-8 in Salem. The theme was "Build on the Basics to Build the Future". In addition to OVRS staff, representatives of many of OVRS' partners and stakeholders attended, including:

- Oregon Commission for the Blind
- State Rehabilitation Council
- State Independent Living Council
- 121 tribal programs
- Department of Human Services' Service Delivery Area representatives
- Community rehabilitation providers
- Community college/disability services offices
- Western Oregon University, Rehabilitation Counselor Education Program
- Portland State University, Rehabilitation Counselor Education Program
- Western Washington University, Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation
- Oregon Business Leadership Network
- Oregon Employment and Training Association
- Oregon Rehabilitation Association
- Oregon Employer Council
- Oregon Department of Education
- National Rehabilitation Association, Oregon Chapter
- 30 local vendors for assistive technology and resources for rehabilitation professionals

In addition to providing educational and training opportunities, the In-Service Training Conference serves as an opportunity to recruit future vocational rehabilitation personnel from the pool of students attending the conference.

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During FFY 2007, OVRS training resources provided or enhanced staff development opportunities in the following areas:

- New Counselor Training
- Medical and Functional Aspects of Disability in Rehabilitation
- Personality Disorders
- Cultural Diversity - Serving Latino Consumers in Vocational Rehabilitation
- Self- Employment
- New Counselor Training/Things You Need to Know
- Best Practices for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors
- Resource materials (Disability Handbook and Medical Aspects of Disability)
- Mediations/customer support
- Employment Outcome Strategies
- Cognitive Motivational Tools for Negotiating Behavior Change
- Dual Diagnosis
- Supported Employment
- Assistive technology and current research: DBTAC Northwest ADA center
- Benefits Planning
- Work Readiness Alternatives Workshops
- Purchasing and Financial Aid
- Leadership Skills
- Self-Employment
- Ethics

Looking ahead to FFY 2008, OVRS' staff training, development and recruitment strategies will include:

- Training
  - Providing training on ORCA 5.0, the new iteration of OVRS' case management software, to all staff
  - Continuing to provide OVRS' New Counselor Training to all new staff

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- Continuing to provide training on DHS Core Values and Ethics for Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals to all staff
- Implementing the Enhancing Employment Outcomes Project by providing all counseling and administrative staff with EEOP training and through other programmatic activities
- Continuing to partner with WOU's Rehabilitation Education Program and Salem Hospital Rehabilitation Center in training to staff on the medical and functional aspects of disability in the vocational rehabilitation process
- Providing training to staff on new and refined policies and practices and other areas of concern and interest, including:
  - Self-Employment
  - Rural Rehabilitation Issues for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons
  - Supported Employment
  - Critical Case Questioning
  - Caseload Management
  - Best Practices
- Other Staff Development Activities
  - Complete a new training needs assessment
  - Develop a training plan based on the findings of the training needs assessment and the 2007 Comprehensive Needs Assessment
  - Continue to organize and hold a two-day annual in-service conference for all staff and OVRS partners
  - Provide opportunities for staff to obtain training on traumatic brain injuries, autism, deafness and hearing loss, working with persons with development disabilities and persons with psychiatric disabilities, and person-centered planning.
  - Continue to participate in the Region X Leadership Academy
  - Continue to utilize Department of Human Services and Department of Administrative Services' training on leadership
  - Continue to provide, as appropriate and feasible, out-of-class work opportunities to staff

- Recruitment
  - Continue to participate in Region X recruitment initiative
  - Continue to work with DHS, Office of Human Resources in recruiting new staff
  - As possible, recruit for new staff at out state conferences and events
  - Support career advancement within OVRs

### **Communication with Diverse Populations**

OVRs employs a variety of approaches in communicating with persons who do not speak English or have a limited proficiency in English.

OVRs continued to hire and retain staff capable of communicating with diverse populations.

OVRs continued to develop and utilize training materials in alternate formats, including new counselor training materials, to meet the accommodation needs of vocational rehabilitation counselors who are blind. Staff and consumers that need accommodations for training events are also assisted with assistive listening devices, and qualified interpreters.

In specific geographic areas and for specific caseloads, OVRs engaged in targeted recruiting for job applicants with specific language skills.

OVRs staff who are not fluent in the native language of an applicant or a client have access to and training in the use of AT&T's language service, and access to qualified interpreters. In addition, the office has developed and utilizes outreach and application materials in alternate language formats, including Spanish and Russian.

OVRs collaborated with a number of its community partners on a project that provided specialized job placement services to native Spanish-speaking clients.

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And OVRs collaborated with the American Indian Disability Technical Assistance Center on another, similar project.

In FFY 2006, OVRs obtained NexTalk software in order to increase its communication capacity with Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired clients, and OVRs staff were trained in the use of NexTalk. However, over the past year, it has become evident that many Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired clients do not utilize TTYs and so OVRs is re-evaluating its use of NexTalk.

OVRs continues to explore the feasibility of using Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) in field offices across the state. This is a pilot project in conjunction with DHS' Oregon Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (ODHHS) program and staff from the DHS Director's Office. Three VRI stations have been purchased and deployed to areas in the state where the need for ASL interpreting services are dire and sparse. OVRs is now waiting for its partner programs to finish preparation to field test this service. Concurrently, OVRs is guiding staff from the DHS Director's Office through making connections with local VRI providers in case ASL interpreters currently contracted through ODHHS are unable to fulfill the request for VRI services.

OVRs maintains Sorensen video-phones for staff who require ASL interpretation and has one D-link video-phone placed in a field office in Portland, to allow an OVRs counselor with a predominantly deaf caseload to communicate directly with OVRs consumers in their native language. This D-link also allows the staff member to answer questions from a deaf student intern more expediently than previously was possible.

### **Coordination with Personnel Development under IDEA**

OVRs continues to work in partnership with the Department of Education and local school districts in support of IDEA and together have accomplished the following:

- Implemented an intergovernmental agreement that addresses staff development activities.

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- Collaborated with the Oregon Department of Education for in-service training, NetCasts and workshops.
- Provided training for new and ongoing Youth Transition Project sites through OVRs collaborative programs with the school districts.
- Provided training to VR staff, schools personnel, parents and community partners on transition services available through the relationship between OVRs and the Department of Education.

### **State Rehabilitation Council**

OVRs continues to benefit from the active participation of State Rehabilitation Council member Dr. Cheryl Davis, representing the Western Oregon University rehabilitation-counseling program. The SRC as a whole, and Dr. Davis and Dr. Keller, also an associate professor from Western Oregon University, continue to provide useful feedback and creative solutions on ways to meet OVRs staff development and training needs.

In addition, the SRC continues to provide input and guidance on ways to increase OVRs outreach to rehabilitation counseling program students and graduates. Through its relationship with Dr. Davis and Dr. Keller, OVRs is makes presentations to graduate classes and links students with internship opportunities.

SRC members are invited to and participate in OVRs in-service training activities.

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

OVRS, in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), completed a comprehensive statewide assessment of rehabilitation needs in 2008. The development of the FFY 2009 State Plan was guided by results from this assessment as well as the following information resources:

- Preliminary feedback from the RSA monitoring visit
- The SRC Consumer Satisfaction Survey (CSS)
- The 2007 Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- *A Blueprint for Change*, the Oregon Comprehensive Employment Project's Strategic Plan, and
- Innovation and expansion activities for the period 2006 – 2007

Additionally, OVRS took into consideration RSA's guidance on the development of quantifiable outcomes for identified goals and objectives. OVRS believes that in taking this approach it will be able to more effectively determine the efficacy of strategies, enhance program accountability and focus agency resources.

**Background**

OVRS contracted with Program and Policy Insights, LLC (PPI) to conduct the needs assessment. The following key research questions guided the data collection and analysis:

- Consumers' needs and barriers: What are the primary barriers to employment for OVRS consumers, and/or what are their service needs?
- OVRS Service Provision: How can OVRS services best support consumer efforts to achieve positive employment outcomes?
- Target Population Estimates: What does the OVRS population look like?

PPI utilized multiple strategies to obtain input, including:

- A mixed mode survey of current OVRs consumers
- A web-based survey of OVRs staff
- Semi-guided telephone interviews with 50 other key stakeholders, including SRC leadership
- Analysis of selected documents and existing disability prevalence data.

### **Recommendations**

Based on assessment results, PPI made the following recommendations:

#### **Barriers and Service Provision: Overall OVRs Consumers**

- Continue to focus on connecting consumers with opportunities to improve job skills and obtain education/training.
- Increase employer and public education on the abilities of people with disabilities.
- Increase provision of, or access to, sustained follow-up services.
- Continue efforts to maintain the accessibility and availability of OVRs services.
- Improve efforts to ensure connections to other supportive services.

#### **Barriers and Service Provision: Selected OVRs Target Populations**

##### *Persons with Most Significant Disabilities*

- Include targeted information about working with persons with significant disabilities during employer outreach.
- Continue implementation of model programs to serve consumers with significant disabilities, including Supported Employment and/or Return-to-Work programs.

##### *Racial, Ethnic, or Cultural Minority Consumers*

- Provide culturally responsive services.
- Ensure access to language-appropriate services for ethnic and cultural minorities.

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*Youth in Transition*

- Continue to build stronger skill-building programs for youth.
- Identify additional opportunities to help youth overcome barriers related to other transportation issues.

*Multiple Selected Target Populations*

- Apply recommendations from the overall population to selected target populations, remaining sensitive to potential differences.

Other Strategies to Support Effective Service Provision

- Strengthen overall collaboration with all program partners.
- Enhance partnerships with supportive service providers.
- Improve partnerships with education agencies at the state and local level.
- Deepen partnerships with selected stakeholder groups.
- Increase staff training in targeted areas.
- Support staff efforts to conduct job development and build employer relationships.
- Continue to support activities related to key issue areas and values articulated by Oregon Competitive Employment Project.

Target Population Estimates

- Continue to explore potential need for additional staffing and branch office locations in regions with larger employment gaps and/or employment population estimates.
- Consider using a range of estimates for funding requests and/or staffing allocations, and continue to pursue sources of data related to disability severity.
- Identify and address barriers to employment faced by African-Americans/Blacks.
- Continue to focus efforts on serving racial/ethnic minority and non-minority consumers equitably.
- Consider using OPS and ACS employment disability measures in future analyses.

#### Future OVRs Needs Assessments

- Allow for more upfront planning activities.
- Facilitate greater employer input.
- Consider additional outcomes-related evaluation efforts that relate selected services to employment outcomes.

#### **Development of New Goals, Priorities (Objectives), Strategies and Outcomes**

OVRs, in a robust, collaborative partnership with a SRC workgroup and input from the agency's management staff, took the findings from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and the other information sources and crafted five broad goals:

- Increase the number and quality as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked and consumer satisfaction of employment outcomes for all OVRs consumers.
- Increase the number of youth who seeks OVRs services and the number and quality of employment outcomes for this population.
- Engage employers in order to increase the number and quality of employment outcomes for persons with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities.
- Continually improve the management of the program while insuring compliance with appropriate laws, rules and policy.
- Ensure a highly trained workforce at every level of the organization.

With associated priorities (objectives), strategies and outcomes the process was iterative, beginning with a review of all the information sources and validation by the SRC workgroup of the first consolidation of the information into broad goals. Agency staff in turn refined and narrowed the number of goals and populated the plan with high level objectives, strategies and outcomes. The SRC workgroup continued to review and validate staff work providing input and feedback. A draft of the plan was shared with the full SRC at a quarterly meeting for their review, input and feedback. The plan was then shared with the public through five public hearings and posting on OVRs' website.

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

Based on estimates developed by Program and Policy Insight, in conducting the 2007 OVRs Comprehensive Needs Assessment, the population of persons between the ages of 16 and 64 with an employment related disability is 221,716 based on the 2007 Oregon Population Survey or 181,292 based on the 2006 American Community Survey. However, the number of individuals actually eligible for OVRs may be less than either estimate because of the way both estimates define disability.

During FFY 2007, OVRs served 16,306 individuals with disabilities with Title I and Title VI, Part B funding.

OVRs projects that it will serve 16,030 persons in FFY 2009, a 1.6 percent decrease from the number of persons served in FFY 2007. This decrease is based on historical caseload trends. OVRs anticipates that it will cost approximately \$34 million in state and federal funds to provide services at current service levels and with its existing program capacity. This anticipated expenditure is based on historical spending patterns.

In FFY 2007, OVRs provided 656 individuals with supported employment services. Of these, 377 individuals were assisted with Title VI, Part B funding. In FFY 2009, OVRs will seek to provide supported employment services to approximately 377 persons.

**ATTACHMENT 4.11(c)(1)**  
**Goals and Priorities of the State in Carrying Out**  
**the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs**

*and*

**ATTACHMENT 4.11(d)**

**Strategies, including Innovation and Expansion Activities to:**

- **Address Identified Needs and Achieve Goals and Priorities**
- **Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities and Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities who are Minorities**
- **Overcome Identified Barriers relating to Equitable Access to and Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in State Vocational Rehabilitation Services and State Supported Employment Services**

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services' (OVRS) goals, priorities (objectives), strategies and outcomes were jointly developed by OVRS and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), through the process outlined in Attachment 4.11.a. These goals, objectives, strategies and outcomes are outlined on the following pages.

**OVRs FFY 2009**  
**GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES**

**Note to Reader:**

- Shaded text denotes strategies in which OVRs is already engaged.
- “Indicators” refers to the federal performance indicators that OVRs is require to meet (see Attachment 4.11(e)(2) for more)

<b>GOAL I. Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRs clients.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>A.</b> Increase number of employment outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue development and implementation of Enhancing Employment Outcomes Program initiative</li> <li>2. Educate and engage employers in hiring persons with disabilities utilizing Goal 3 strategies</li> <li>3. Analyze current performance to identify strategies and practices that correlate with increased performance and plan for replication in 2010</li> <li>4. Ensure availability of labor market information to counselors</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of employment outcomes (Indicator 1.1) Baseline FFY 07: 2,871 Target: 2,920</li> <li>▪ Increase percent of clients in plan who obtain an employment outcome (Indicator 1.2) Baseline FFY 07: 65.1% Target: 66%</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL I.</b> Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>B.</b> Increase the quality of employment outcomes as measured by wages, availability of employer paid benefits, and number of hours worked	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the need for, structure of and funding requirements and sources for a Job Developer Academy to increase the quality and number of employment outcomes</li> <li>2. Maintain the Preferred Workers Program with Workers Compensation Program and explore feasibility of expanding as requested</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of clients obtaining employment who received employer paid medical benefits Baseline FFY 07: 31% Target: 33%</li> <li>▪ Increase average number of hours worked Baseline FFY 07: 30.12 Target: 31</li> <li>▪ Increase average wage (Indicators 1.1 and 1.5) Baseline FFY 07: \$10.58 Target: \$10.99</li> <li>▪ Percent of clients obtaining post-secondary degree or certificate who also obtain employment Baseline FFY 07: 75% Target: 77%</li> <li>▪ Feasibility study recommendations</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL I. Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>C.</b> Revise self employment policy and associated technical assistance guide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obtain technical assistance from the Rehabilitation Services Administration and other resources on self employment</li> <li>2. Provide training to staff on policy and best practices</li> <li>3. Develop a self-employment tool kit</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revised baseline</li> </ul>
<b>D.</b> Increase the number of adults with significant disabilities who are employed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of supported employment clients obtaining employment outcomes</li> <li>2. Continue to explore establishing the Department of Human Services as a Ticket to Work “employment network” revenue stream for ongoing support services for individuals with psychiatric disabilities, developmental disabilities and/or traumatic brain injuries</li> <li>3. Continue to revise and update supported employment training and resource materials, including a toolkit</li> <li>4. Continue to collaborate with Addictions and Mental Health Division in implementing and expanding evidence-based supported employment</li> <li>5. Utilize training from the Center for Excellence on supported employment for individuals with psychiatric disabilities</li> <li>6. Continue to collaborate with Office of Developmental Disabilities and brokerages in providing supported employment to individuals with developmental disabilities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of SSI /SSDI recipients with employment outcomes (Indicator 1.4) Baseline FFY 07: 711 Target: 750</li> <li>▪ Increase number of employment outcomes for supported employment clients (Indicator 1.4) Baseline FFY 07: 204 Target:235</li> <li>▪ Increase percent of supported employment outcomes (Indicator 1.4) Baseline FFY 07: 65 Target: 67%</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL 1. Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>E.</b> Increase the participation of and outcomes for individuals from cultural, ethnic and/or linguistic minorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue Latino Project in Portland and Salem and explore feasibility of expanding to Bend</li> <li>2. Continue to support, collaborate with and provide technical assistance to the 121 programs of the Confederated tribes of Grande Ronde and Warm Springs</li> <li>3. Continue to recruit bicultural and bilingual staff</li> <li>4. Identify additional opportunities to outreach to cultural, ethnic and/or linguistic minorities who are potential clients</li> <li>5. Ensure linguistic access to services through the use of interpreters, translators and bilingual materials</li> <li>6. Identify and address barriers to employment faced by individuals with disabilities who are cultural, ethnic or linguistic minorities</li> <li>7. Provide culturally competent services</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of minority clients served Baseline FFY 07: 1,330 (Indicator 2.1) Target: 1,350</li> <li>▪ Increase percent of minority clients obtaining employment Baseline FFY 07: 58.78% (Indicator 1.2) Target: 60%</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL I. Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>F.</b> Maintain and develop connections to programs and services that assist clients obtain and maintain employment outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue Work Readiness Alternatives Workshop programs on a statewide basis</li> <li>2. Continue to partner with Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development in supporting and implementing the Disability Navigator Program</li> <li>3. Maintain the Career Workforce Skills Training Programs at community colleges</li> <li>4. Continue to work with Independent Living Centers to identify services that support and improve employment outcomes</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contracts in place for Work Readiness Alternatives Workshops</li> <li>▪ Quarterly meeting attendance with Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development</li> <li>▪ Maintain number of Career Workforce Skills Training programs Baseline: 2 Target: 2</li> <li>▪ Maintain number of contracts OVRS branches have with Independent Living Centers to provide services Baseline: 8 Target: 8</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL I.</b> Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>G.</b> Develop, administer and sustain a state wide work incentives planning system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop policy option package to support continuation of the work incentives planning system</li> <li>2. Develop and utilize a departmental work group to support implementation of the work incentives planning system</li> <li>3. Pursue grant funding to support the expansion of work incentives counselors in high schools to target transition age youth</li> <li>4. Provide training to staff on the work incentives planning system</li> <li>5. Provide training to 121 tribal programs on the work incentives planning system and new Social Security Ticket to Work regulations</li> <li>6. Provide training and outreach on work incentives to parents and caregivers of persons with significant disabilities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Submission of policy option package</li> <li>▪ Percent of SSI/SSDI employments that meet substantial gainful SGA at closure (Indicator 1.6) Baseline FFY 07: 33% Target: 36%</li> <li>▪ Number of work incentives system referrals who become OVRS applicants Establish baseline:</li> <li>▪ Submission of grant proposal</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL I.</b> Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>H.</b> Improve access and quality of services for Deaf and hard of hearing persons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify current technology needs; available technology; conduct cost benefit analysis; and develop corresponding recommendations.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of staff with American Sign Language skills</li> <li>3. Continue statewide coordination of services to Deaf and hard of hearing persons</li> <li>4. Provide outreach to the Deaf and hard of hearing communities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase the number of Deaf and hard of hearing impaired persons with employment outcomes Baseline FFY 07: 330 (Indicator 1.4) Target: 345</li> <li>▪ Increase number of transition age Deaf youth (18-24) and youth who are hard of hearing with employment outcomes (Indicator 1.4) Baseline FFY 07: 24 Target: 30</li> <li>▪ Technology recommendation</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL I. Increase the number and quality (as measured by wages, availability of benefits, number of hours worked, and client satisfaction) of employment outcomes for all OVRS clients.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>I.</b> Enhance coordination with workforce partners and vocational rehabilitation programs so that people with disabilities have better access and are better prepared for employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue participation in the Workforce Policy Cabinet</li> <li>2. Continue to collaborate with workforce partners to provide training and technical assistance to Oregon's workforce regions in developing, implementing and updating Resource Sharing Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding</li> <li>3. Continue to assess the training needs of workforce partners located in Employment Department offices and one-stops at the local level and provide training as appropriate</li> <li>4. Increase the number of cases co-staffed with workforce partners</li> <li>5. Ensure staff are aware of workforce system resources including training resources</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of shared clients with workforce partners Establish baseline:</li> </ul>
<b>J.</b> Increase the availability and quality of job development services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore the feasibility of creating staff job developers</li> <li>2. Develop standardized job developer reports</li> <li>3. Explore the feasibility of certifying job developers</li> <li>4. Explore the feasibility of outcome based payment for job development services</li> <li>5. See strategies for Goal I, Objective B</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis and report on feasibility of staff job developers</li> <li>▪ Standardized job developer reports</li> <li>▪ Analysis and report on feasibility of certifying job developers</li> <li>▪ Analysis and report on outcome based payment for job development services</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL II. Increase the number of youth who seek OVRS services and the number and quality of employment outcomes for this population.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>A.</b> Increase the number of transition age youth (14-24) who obtain employment outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue transition job fairs in partnership with Oregon Business Leadership Network and others</li> <li>2. Continue Youth Transition Program</li> <li>3. Continue Career Workforce Skills Training Program</li> <li>4. Continue implementation of Project Access, a grant opportunity to demonstrate a new youth transition service model</li> <li>5. Analyze current performance to identify strategies and practices that correlate with increased performance and replicate statewide</li> <li>6. Continue collaboration with the Early Assessment Screening and Treatment Project, which focuses on transition age youth with psychiatric disabilities</li> <li>7. Work with Office of Developmental Disabilities to establish collaborative relationships with the three new developmental disability supports and services brokerages scheduled to go on line over the next year</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of transition age youth served Baseline FY 07: 1,643 Target: 1,693</li> <li>▪ Increase percent of transition age youth obtaining an employment outcome Baseline FFY 07: 66.6% (Indicator 1.1) Target: 68%</li> <li>▪ Increase percent of transition age youth who obtain a post-secondary degree or certificate and obtain a successful closure (Indicator 1.2) Baseline FFY 07: 83% Target: 85%</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL II. Increase the number of youth who seek OVRS services and the number and quality of employment outcomes for this population.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>B.</b> Increase the quality of employment outcomes as measured by wages, availability of employer paid benefits, and hours worked	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support the Office of Developmental Disabilities' job development training pilot</li> <li>2. Continue Career Workforce Skills Training Program</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase average wage Baseline \$8.47 (Indicators 1.3 and 1.5) Target: \$8.60</li> <li>▪ Increase percent with employer paid benefits Baseline: 20.2% Target: 21%</li> <li>▪ Increase number of hours worked Baseline: 27.9 Target: 28.5</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL II.</b> Increase the number of youth who seek OVRS services and the number and quality of employment outcomes for this population.		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>C.</b> Increase the number of youth with more significant disabilities who receive services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to partner with the Office of Developmental Disabilities Services to provide training and technical assistance to community-based developmental disability programs</li> <li>2. Continue to revise, update and disseminate supported employment training and resource materials, including a toolkit</li> <li>3. Arrange for training through external and internal resources to address training needs specific to this population</li> <li>4. Determine the feasibility of Project Search to increase employment outcomes</li> <li>5. Pursue grant funding to support the expansion of work incentive counselors and Disability Navigators Program in high school to target transition age youth</li> <li>6. Continue to explore the feasibility of establishing the Department of Human Services as a Ticket to Work “employment network” as a strategy to create a revenue stream to fund ongoing support services for persons with developmental disabilities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of students who are SSI/SDDI recipients who obtain an employment outcome Baseline: 136 (Indicator 1.4) Target: 145</li> <li>▪ Increase the number of students in supported employment outcomes (Indicator 1.4) Baseline: 72 Target: 78</li> <li>▪ Submission of grant proposal</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL II.</b> Increase the number of youth who seek OVRS services and the number and quality of employment outcomes for this population.		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>D.</b> Improve partnerships with education agencies at the state and local level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to partner with Department of Education, University of Oregon, and Oregon school districts to carry out the Youth Transition Program</li> <li>2. Continue to partner with three community colleges in carrying out the Career Workforce Skills Training Program</li> <li>3. Explore opportunities with the Oregon School for the Deaf to develop integrated services</li> <li>4. Continue to participate in the Core Work Group with the Commission for the Blind and Oregon Community Colleges in order to exchange information and address concerns</li> <li>5. Continue to participate on State Advisory Council for Special Education and its Transition Committee; and, Modified Diploma Taskforce</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain number of Youth Transition Program sites</li> <li>▪ Determine the number of employment outcomes attributed to partnerships</li> </ul> <p>Establish baseline</p>

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<b>GOAL II. Increase the number of youth who seek OVRs services and the number and quality of employment outcomes for this population.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>E.</b> Increase the awareness and understanding of transition among youth and their parents, teachers, and disability advocates and professionals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with the local and state level advisory boards to Project Access to identify opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of transition issues</li> <li>2. Co-sponsor and participate in annual transition conference</li> <li>3. Educate OVRs staff, DHS partners, education staff and parents of youth in transition about services available to transition youth, including supported employment</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase number of transition age youth served            Baseline FY 07: 1,643            Target: 1,693</li> </ul>
<b>F.</b> Increase the participation of and outcomes for youth from cultural, ethnic and/or linguistic minorities and Deaf and hard of hearing youth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore the feasibility of partnering with counselors of the 121 tribal programs to provide vocational awareness activities to transition age youth with disabilities</li> <li>2. Ensure linguistic access through the use of bilingual staff, interpreters and translated materials</li> <li>3. Identify opportunities to outreach to potential cultural, ethnic and/or linguistic minority clients with disabilities</li> <li>4. Provide culturally competent services</li> <li>5. Develop a strategy for increasing participation and positive outcomes for Deaf and hard of hearing youth</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interpreters available 100% of the time when requested            Establish baseline</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL III. Engage employers in order to increase the number and quality of employment outcomes for persons with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>A.</b> Increase understanding awareness, and interest of Oregon's businesses in employing people with disabilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to contract with the Oregon Business Leadership Network to promote employment of persons with disabilities on a business to business basis</li> <li>2. Continue to partner with the Oregon Commission for the Blind in developing and coordinating employer engagement strategies</li> <li>3. Continue to partner with Employment Department's business and account representatives to access the labor market</li> <li>4. Continue implementation of Enhancing Employment Outcomes Project</li> <li>5. Support and participate in U.S. Business Leadership Network 2008 annual conference Inform and educate employers about incentives for employing persons with disabilities</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of employers who request subsequent referrals for new job openings</li> <li>Establish baseline</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL III. Engage employers in order to increase the number and quality of employment outcomes for persons with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>B.</b> Improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to participate in Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's National Employment Network (VR-NET)</li> <li>2. Continue to identify apprenticeship opportunities for clients in the building trades</li> <li>3. Participate in DHS work group to re-establish HIRE program</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase numbers of job referrals Establish baseline</li> <li>▪ Increase number of employment outcomes from VR-NET Establish baseline:</li> <li>▪ Increase number of apprenticeship referrals Establish baseline:</li> <li>▪ Increase number of apprenticeships obtained Establish baseline:</li> </ul>
<b>C.</b> Participate in the development of a state and national marketing campaign for employment of persons with disabilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pursue grant funding and support to air <i>Look at My Ability</i> public service announcements</li> <li>2. Collaborate with other state Medicaid Infrastructure Grant projects to develop the state and national marketing campaign and implement in Oregon</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Broadcast of <i>Look at My Ability</i> in major Oregon media markets</li> <li>▪ Secure one or more major campaign sponsors from both private and public sectors</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL IV. Continually improve the management of the program while insuring compliance with appropriate laws, rules and policy.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>A.</b> Build upon current data analysis to conduct ongoing program evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pursue technical assistance from Rehabilitation Services Administration</li> <li>2. Use available data to determine the best use of training and technical assistance provided to the field</li> <li>3. Use available data to determine management focus for field staff supervision</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Decrease the number of errors cited by RSA in yearly 911 reports Baseline: 119 Target: 50</li> <li>▪ Target strategies determined most effective based on data to improve successful outcomes</li> <li>▪ Identification of and implementation of operational indicators</li> </ul>
<b>B.</b> Maximize the use of technological tools to enhance performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring ORCA 5.0 online</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase time spent with clients by reducing the amount of time spent on case administration Establish baseline</li> <li>▪ Improve accuracy of data collection Establish baseline</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL IV. Continually improve the management of the program while insuring compliance with appropriate laws, rules and policy.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>C.</b> Develop and implement those systems and processes necessary to maximize utilization of Social Security's Ticket to Work Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop current Ticket to Work manual</li> <li>2. Train OVRs field staff on Ticket to Work processes and procedures</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase the number of Tickets assigned Establish baseline</li> <li>▪ Increase the amount of Ticket reimbursements Establish baseline</li> </ul>
<b>D.</b> Minimize risks and liabilities in the administration of the program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrative staff perform ORCA file reviews prior to field file reviews to determine focus areas</li> <li>2. Provide overview of branch review findings to policy and training staff</li> <li>3. Update current OVRs policy manual, technical assistance guide and best practices</li> <li>4. Continue to review OVRs' policies, procedures and practice to ensure compliance with federal and state law; appropriateness of policies, practices and procedures ; and, appropriate utilization of resources</li> <li>5. Pursue technical assistance from Rehabilitation Services Administration on fiscal management, contracting and performance based contracting for program and department staff</li> <li>6. Attend RSA Fiscal Conference</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No audit findings</li> <li>▪ Accurate fiscal reports</li> <li>▪ Standardized contracting procedures including reporting requirements and compliance with federal requirements</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL V. Ensure a highly trained workforce at every level of the organization.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>A.</b> Ensure staff have the skills, knowledge and ability to perform their jobs at a high level of proficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Train all staff on ORCA 5.0</li> <li>2. Require all new staff to complete New Counselor Training</li> <li>3. Require all staff to complete Values and Ethics Training</li> <li>4. Require all new staff to complete training associated with Employment Enhancement Opportunity Program initiative</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduction in number of negative RSA review findings</li> <li>Establish baseline</li> </ul>
<b>B.</b> Increase staff knowledge in targeted areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion of Training Needs Assessment</li> <li>2. Development of training plan based on findings of Training Needs Assessment and 2007 Comprehensive Needs Assessment</li> <li>3. Staff participation in training relevant to brain injury; autism; Deafness and hearing loss; working with individuals with developmental disabilities and psychiatric disabilities; and person-centered planning</li> <li>4. OVRS In-Service Conference</li> <li>5. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to maximize training opportunities and resources</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completed training needs assessment and training plan</li> <li>▪ Internal and external training opportunities to address identified training needs</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL V. Ensure a highly trained workforce at every level of the organization.</b>		
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>OUTCOMES</b>
<b>C.</b> Continue to recruit to meet the Rehabilitation Act's requirements for a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development and OVRs specific skill needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue work with Region X recruitment initiative</li> <li>2. Continue to work with Department of Human Services, Office of Human Resources in recruiting staff</li> <li>3. Recruit, as possible, at out-of-state conferences and events</li> <li>4. Support career advancement within the program</li> <li>5. Continue participation in Region X Leadership Academy</li> <li>6. Continue to utilize Department of Human Services' and Department of Administrative Services' leadership trainings</li> <li>7. Provide, as appropriate, out-of-class work opportunities for staff at every level of the organization</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant pools whose skills, education and experience align with CSPD goals and specific skill needs</li> </ul>

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

In FFY 2007, OVRS:

- Served 656 individuals in supported employment of which 377 individuals were served utilizing Title VI, Part B funds.
- Was allocated \$309,410 in Title VI, Part B funds, of which it expended \$362,505.
- Expended an additional \$160,272 from general VR 110 basic support funds for assessments and other services that resulted in supported employment plans.
- Closed 313 Title VI, Part B funded cases, of which:
  - 204 entered competitive employment in supported employment; and,
  - 109 cases were closed without entering employment.

OVRS anticipates expending in FFY 2009 approximately \$362,000 in Title VI, Part B funds to provide plan services to these individuals.

**Goal**

In FFY 2009, OVRS will seek to provide supported employment services to 650 individuals, and assist 235 individuals in obtaining competitive employment.

**Plans**

OVRS' supported employment program is potentially available to any individual with a most significant disability who needs such services to be successfully and competitively employed. Title VI, Part B funds are utilized for the time-limited services necessary for an individual to stabilize in competitive employment in an integrated setting. The counselor and the individual agree on the services to be provided to the client on an individualized basis. Services that may be part of a supported employment individual plan for employment (IPE) include:

- Person-centered planning
- Community-based assessment

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- Job development
- Job placement
- On-site training for worker and/or co-workers
- Long-term support development
- Other services and goods
- Post-employment services

Draft

**ATTACHMENT 4.11(e)(2)**  
**Evaluation and Report of Progress in**  
**Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and use of**  
**Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities**

OVRS exceeded the federal minimum standards for each indicator on the most current federal standards and indicators available (FFY 2007):

<b>Federal Indicator</b>	<b>OVRS Performance</b>	<b>Federal Standard</b>
1.1 Change in employment outcomes	-113	Greater Than Zero
1.2 Percent of employment outcomes	65.1 percent	55.8 percent
1.3 Competitive employment	91.3 percent	72.6 percent
1.4 Significant disability	82.4 percent	62.4 percent
1.5 Earnings ratio	.563	.52
1.6 Self support	74.5 percent	53 percent
2.1 Access to services for minorities	.88	.80

The following information describes the continuing and completed activities for OVRS' 2007 goals and priorities (referred to here as "sub-goals").

**GOAL 1. INCREASE THE EMPLOYMENT AND RETENTION OF EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

**Sub-Goal A. Increase understanding, awareness, and interest of Oregon businesses in employing people with disabilities**

- OVRS continued to contract with the Oregon Business Leadership Network (OBLN) to promote employment of persons with disabilities on a business-to-business basis. OBLN is a business-led, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the employment of persons with disabilities through informing,

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educating and assisting Oregon businesses in hiring, retaining and promoting persons with disabilities. Over FFY 2007, OVRS:

- OBLN heightened its efforts to develop its organizational infrastructure and capacity. To this end, OBLN:
  - Developed and began to implement strategic and business plans.
  - Refined its business sponsorships and increased membership dues.
  - Initiated other fundraising activities, including grant writing and collecting subscriptions for materials available through its website and e-magazine.

OVRS's continuing support of OBLN is predicated on OBLN becoming increasing self-reliant, as well as achieving its business engagement outcomes.

- Continued to engage business and employers through a number of activities, including:
  - Establishing a local chapter in Salem and initiated work to establish a chapter in the southern Oregon community of Medford. These efforts were and are being done in concert with the local OVRS' branch and OVRS' Employer Services Coordinator.
  - Publishing its monthly electronic magazine "Inclusion at Work" for OBLN business and employer affiliates and disability professionals. This e-zine provides useful information about disability employment initiatives, resources for employers who employ individuals with disabilities or are considering doing so, and other useful information.
  - Providing empirical and anecdotal information to the business community about the large number of well qualified people with disabilities in the labor market, their impressive job performance ratings, the low cost of most job accommodations, and other information about viability and benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.
  - Partnering with OVRS and Oregon Commission for the Blind to increase the number of businesses participating in summer internship programs for high school and college youth and young adults with disabilities.

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- Partnering with OBLN's Employer Services Coordinator and OCEP in developing and rolling out a comprehensive campaign for marketing employment of persons with disabilities to Oregon employers. OVRS, OCEP and OBLN completed production of a two-minute video, *Look at My Ability*, in which persons with disabilities talk about their interest in and ability to engage in competitive employment. OBLN and OVRS began to utilize and promote the video in interactions with businesses and business groups and public officials. Plans are being made for converting the video into public service announcements, and leveraging the results to develop the next phases of the campaign.
- Updating the FlexAbility Resource Manual for business.
- Representing the interests of Oregon's businesses on Oregon Competitive Employment Project's (OCEP) Leadership Council and served on OCEP's Employer Engagement Workgroup (OCEP is an OVRS-administered systems-change initiative that seeks to increase competitive employment of person with disabilities. See Goal 1.I. below and Attachments 4.8(b)(1) and 6.3 for more.)
- OVRS continued to fund a limited duration Employer Program Coordinator staff position. In FFY 2007, the coordinator:
  - Renegotiated and administered OVRS's contract with OBLN.
  - Worked closely with OBLN in refining and expanding its organizational infrastructure and capacity.
  - Provided leadership, training, consultation and guidance to OVRS management and staff and the State Rehabilitation Council in their interactions with public and private employers; and, participated in implementation of OVRS' EEOP pilot. See Goal 1.B. below for more.
  - Continued to work in partnership and collaboration with the Oregon Commission for the Blind, OBLN and others in coordinating, implementing and supporting employer-related initiatives. In performing this responsibility, the employer coordinator:

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- Continued to inform and educate the state and local Oregon Employer Councils (OEC) about the benefits of employing persons with disabilities. (OEC is nonprofit organization that assists the Oregon Employment Department (ED) and Oregon employers in working together and provides the ED with advice on workforce issues.
  - Participated in the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation's internet network on employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities with national businesses and the federal government (CSAVR VR-NET).
  - Facilitated the partnership between OVRS counselors and the Employment Department's business and account representatives to maximize use of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and other strategies for employers to leverage better relationships with employees.
  - Expanded OVRS' linkages with the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) and the building trades to increase access to construction apprenticeship careers for individuals with disabilities.
  - Participated in Region X's Employer Development Network and monitored the U.S. Department of Labor's business group activities.
  - Coordinated development of materials to market the benefits and incentives available to employers in hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities.
- In partnership with the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, OVRS continued to support and implement the Disability Navigator program. The program is intended to increase the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program's support of individuals with disabilities in overcoming barriers, achieving self-sufficiency and achieving successful employment outcomes through customized supports. During WIA Program Year 2006, the percentage of individuals participating in the WIA Program declined 10 percent, from 1,697 individuals in WIA Program Year 2005 to 1,532 individuals in WIA Program Year 2006).

Over this same period, the Disability Navigators continued to:

- Implement job readiness workshops.
- Provide training on “person-centered planning”.
- Provide assistance to local mental health programs in delivering supported employment services.
- Assist in coordinating resources across multiple service providers to individuals.

**Sub-Goal B. Enhance understanding of the skills and abilities of people with disabilities and effective communication and matching of these skills to employment opportunities**

- In June 2007, OVRS completed its pilot of the “Enhancing Employment Outcomes Project”. Through this pilot project, 40 OVRS counseling staff were provided with specialized training and consultation in addressing client motivational issues and engaging employers on an enhanced basis in order to increase the number of quality employment outcomes. EEOP was initiated in 2005.

EEOP was developed by Employment Management Professionals (under contract with OVRS), and is based on the use of a nationally recognized set of integrated counseling strategies. These strategies are intended to:

- Motivate clients to work and understand and make those lifestyle changes necessary to achieve and maintain employment, as they move from home to work.
- Increase counselor knowledge of job market penetration; increase employer retention of clients; and increase the number of employers interested and willing to hire clients.

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- Provide counselors with practical and advanced methods of developing and maintaining relationships with employers that result in better outcomes for clients.

The pilot project was a success. An evaluation of the pilot indicated that staff participants felt rejuvenated and empowered by EMP's EEOP training and gained a powerful set of counseling strategies and techniques with which to more effectively serve clients. Moreover, in the period between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, OVRS experienced an additional 113 placements and a reduction in cases closed unsuccessful by 60. OVRS believes that the EEOP training was significant factor in these increased positive outcomes.

Based on the positive results of the EEOP pilot, OVRS has since made plans to provide EEOP training and support to all OVRS professional staff. The training began earlier this year and is slated for completion in 2010. Based on its experience with the EEOP pilot, OVRS believes that the EEOP model is very useful in serving clients for whom traditional vocational rehabilitation approaches have been of limited or no benefit because many of these clients do not have the access they need to the job market, and those who do have access lack the motivation to obtain and maintain employment.

- OVRS increased the number of branches in FFY 2007 providing either the Work Readiness Awareness Workshop (WRAW) or related programs from six to eleven branches. In FFY 2008, OVRS will contract for WRAW programs so that they are available on a statewide basis in FFY 2008.
- OVRS continued to support and implement the Disability Navigator program. See Goal 1.A. above for more.

**Sub-Goal C. Improve employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities**

OVRs improved employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities through a number of activities, including maintenance and expansion of its linkages with the DOT, BOLI and Oregon's building trades in order to avail clients of apprenticeship opportunities, and utilization of CSAVR VR-NET to obtain information about job opportunities with national businesses and the federal government. See activities of OVRs Employer Services Coordinator in Goal 1.A. above for more.

**Sub-Goal D. Increase the number and quality of competitive job placements**

- In FFY 2007, OVRs achieved 2,871 employment outcomes, a 3.8 percent decrease from the 2,984 employment outcomes in FFY 2006.
- In SFY 2006, 59.74 percent of clients remained employed one year after case closure, a one percent decrease from those remaining employed in SFY 2005 (60.7 percent).

**Sub-Goal E. Increase wages earned by consumers**

- The average hourly wage for employment placements increased from FFY 2006 through FFY 2007, from \$10.06 an hour to \$10.58 an hour.
- The average hours worked weekly declined slightly from 30.2 hours worked per week in FFY 2006 to 30.1 hours per week in FFY 2007.

**Sub-Goal F. Increase the number of small business/self employment outcomes**

- The number of small business/self employment outcomes continued to decline, from 56 in FFY 2006 to 48 in FFY 2007. OVRs continued but did not complete

development of a new technical assistance guide (TAG) on self-employment and micro-enterprise/self-employment in order to provide field staff with additional direction and support in this area. OVRs is asking for technical assistance from the Rehabilitation Services Administration on self-employment policy, procedures and practices, and requested the same as part of RSA's 2007 monitoring visit of OVRs. Completion of the OVRs TAG and development of related policy and practices have been rescheduled for completion by the end of this calendar year.

- OVRs continued to provide technical assistance to the Oregon Micro-Enterprise Network (OMEN), Oregon's state micro-enterprise association, and their membership to:
- Ensure that entrepreneurs with disabilities have access to high quality training and technical assistance.
- Identify sources of increased federal, state and private funding for the provision of services.

**Sub-Goal G. Increase percentage of adults with lasting significant disabilities who are capable of working who are employed**

- In FFY 2007, the number of individuals with the most significant disabilities whose cases were closed with competitive employment continued to increase, from 1,569 in FFY 2006 to 1,909 in FFY 2007, a 22 percent increase.

See Attachment 6.3 for more on OVRs supported employment initiatives and activities.

**Sub-Goal H. Increase the percentage of adults with disabilities who are employed**

- The percentage of adults with disabilities who obtained competitive

employment decreased marginally, from 65.3 percent in FFY 2006 to 65.1 percent in FFY 2007.

**Sub-Goal I. Improve transitional and on-the-job support services that increase job retention of people with disabilities**

- The percentage of individuals with the most significant disabilities who closed with competitive employment grew by 22 percent, as their numbers increased from 1,569 in FFY 2006 to 1,909 in FFY 2007.

The percentage of individuals with the most significant disabilities who closed with employment also grew but at the more modest rate of 0.8 percent, from 61.3 percent in FFY 2006 to 62.1 percent in FFY 2007.

The average hourly wage for individuals with the most significant disabilities increased from \$9.77 in FFY 2006 to \$10.05 in FFY 2007, while the average number hours they worked grew from 28 in FFY 2006 to 29 in FFY 2007.

- OVRs/OCEP, SPD, AMH, the State Independent Living Council and the Oregon Advocacy Center completed plans for a statewide benefits and work incentives planning system and began development of the system, the Work Incentives Network or WIN. See Goal 2.A. below for more.
- OVRs/OCEP, SPD, the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities and developmental disability support brokerages continued to revise and update supported employment training and resource materials. See Attachment 6.3 for more.
- OVRs/OCEP continued to support SPD's participation in SELN, a national and state initiative intended to rejuvenate state supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities. See Attachment 6.3 for more.

- OVRs continued to refine its new counselor training and training curriculum in order to assist OVRs counselors in providing effective job retention and other vocational rehabilitation services.

## **GOAL 2. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND REFORM SYSTEMS**

### **Sub-Goal A. Improve the rehabilitation process**

- OVRs continued to promote staff development and excellence, and staff use of best practices, through provision of information, training and continuing education. See Attachment 4.10 for more.
- OVRs completed implementation of the Enhancing Employment Outcomes Program pilot project and commenced planning for providing EEOP training to its entire professional staff. See Goal 1.B. above for more.
- OVRs continued to administer the Oregon Competitive Employment Project (OCEP), a comprehensive, multi-year, system-change initiative intended to increase competitive employment of persons with disabilities by developing, refining and enhancing needed services and supports. In the winter of 2005, the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid awarded OVRs a four-year Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) to develop and implement OCEP. Over the ensuing spring and summer, OVRs hired OCEP staff and established a 25-member leadership council of disability, governmental and business leader to guide and advise OCEP. Through the fall of 2005, OCEP developed *A Blueprint for Change*, the strategic plan that outlines its mission, goals and objectives, strategies, initiatives and activities. OCEP's eight overall objectives are:
  - Expansion and refinement of evidence-based supported employment services.
  - Development and operation of a comprehensive and sustainable benefits planning system.

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- Refinement of work incentives.
- Development and implementation of a marketing campaign that promotes employment of persons with disabilities with employers.
- Promotion of youth transition services and supports.
- Development of employment-related transportation services and supports in areas, where such services and supports do not exist, or are limited.
- Promotion of culturally diverse and competent services.
- Strengthening of peer mentoring supports and services.

OCEP began to implement its strategic plan and its strategies and activities for these objectives in February, 2006.

In FFY 2007, OCEP carried out the following initiatives and activities:

- OCEP, OVRS and the Addictions and Mental Health Division (AMH), provided resources and technical assistance to a number of county mental health programs to develop and provide evidence-based supported employment services to persons with psychiatric disabilities.
- OCEP continued to support for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Division's participation in SELN but shifted this support from financial to direct participation, as OCEP joined the SPD work group responsible for implementing SELN's strategic plan. See Attachment 6.3 for more.
- AMH, SPD, the State Independent Living Council (SILC), the Oregon Advocacy Center and OCEP completed plans for a statewide benefits and work incentives planning system ("Work Incentives Network" or "WIN") and began to implement it. WIN includes:
  - A internet-based benefits planning tool.
  - Five regional teams of work incentive coordinators and information and referral specialists.
  - A state-level training, technical assistance and quality assurance center.
  - A research and evaluation component

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WIN is modeled on successful benefits and work incentives planning efforts in a number of other states. In Vermont, recipients of such a program experienced significantly greater increases in employment and their incomes than non-recipients, and experienced a decrease in Medicaid and other health insurance costs. SILC, OVRS and OCEP are providing the initial funding for WIN.

- OCEP provided funding for the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities to continue a train-the-trainer project to assist family members and high school transition youth on person-centered employment training.
- OCEP helped underwrite continuation of an annual statewide conference on transition for educational and disability professionals, youth with disabilities in transition, and family members of such youth. The conference is organized by the Oregon Parent Training Institute and Department of Education, sponsored by OVRS and other human services and educational organizations and programs, and staffed by the OVRS Youth Transition Program Coordinator. This year's conference was attended by 399 educators, SPD case managers, mental health professionals, OVRS staff, clients, supporters of clients and others.
- The Oregon Business Leadership Network and OCEP produced a marketing video for employers on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities. The video is entitled "Look at My Ability" and is the first piece of anticipated comprehensive marketing campaign to educate and engage employers.
- With OCEP's assistance, the Department of Transportation and regional transportation authorities in rural Oregon developed regional transportation plans that highlight the employment-related transportation needs of persons with disabilities.
- OCEP provided two mini-grants to the Portland Public School's Community Transition Center Campus. In turn, 20 students gained employment.

- As a result of the educational efforts of the Department of Housing and Community Supports and OCEP, legislation was passed for Individual Development Accounts to support job retention services for persons with disabilities and other individuals with low incomes.

**Sub-Goal B. Continue to improve customer service**

- After reviewing the State Rehabilitation Council's last consumer satisfaction survey, SRC and OVRs agreed to contract for development and administration of a new survey, which would address both consumer satisfaction with OVRs services and customer service issues. An SRC-OVRs workgroup subsequently met with Abacus, Inc., the firm selected to develop and administer the new survey, and provided direction about the survey format and content, and the process for its administration. The survey was completed in early 2008 and the results have been utilized by OVRs and SRC in planning future OVRs services and activities. In addition, a copy of the final report on the survey and its results has been submitted to RSA.
- OVRs continued its counselor specialist positions. The specialists provide training and consultation to other counselors in working with clients with specific disabilities. In FFY 2007, OVRs maintained specialists in the areas of spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, mental health, and attention deficit disorder/learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, and deafness/hearing loss. In addition, OVRs maintains professional positions that responsible for coordinating programs and providing technical assistance to OVRs field staff in the areas of school-to-work transition and employer outreach.
- OVRs continued to coordinate deaf and hard of hearing services, and provided specialized training and technical assistance to counselors working with clients who are deaf or hard of hearing. In addition, counselors who serve clients with hearing loss or deafness meet on a monthly basis in order to receive training, to exchange information on resources and best practices, and to outreach and network with community groups.

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- In FFY 2007, OVRS had eight staff members fluent in sign language, seven with intermediate or beginning skills, and two ASL fluent counselor interns.
- OVRS continued to use NexTalk in its state and field offices. NextTalk is a computer based program that replaces TTY's and allows all staff direct access to Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired clients. NextTalk has proved less useful than anticipated as many clients do not utilize TTYs. As a result, OVRS is reevaluating its use of NexTalk.

**Sub-Goal C. Maximize the use of technological tools to enhance performance**

- OVRS continued to utilize ORCA, the automated case management system, to document casework. In doing so, OVRS continued to:
  - Provide staff with the training and support necessary to utilize ORCA.
  - Contract with Alliance to develop ORCA upgrades.
  - Use DHS Office of Information Services to customize ORCA to address Oregon-specific needs.

Since implementing ORCA, OVRS has reduced staff time spent on clerical functions and activities and increased time spent on direct services. *Phase II of the Staffing and Process Improvement Study*, conducted by Public Knowledge, LLC, found that "VR counselors spent an average of less than 26 percent of their time entering case notes and documentation for key steps in the VR process. Public Knowledge attributed this to ORCA.

- In serving persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, OVRS continued to utilize NexTalk; explored use of video relay interpreting; utilized other technologies, including Sorensen videophones; and provided technical assistance to other DHS programs in utilizing these technologies. See Goal 2.B. above and Attachment 4.10 for more.

**GOAL 3. EXPAND PROGRAM CAPACITY AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**Sub-Goal A. Expand program capacity for people with disabilities through partnerships with employers, schools and community agencies**

- OVRs continued to partner with Department of Education, University of Oregon and numerous Oregon school districts in carrying out the Youth Transition Program (YTP). YTP assists with youth with disabilities in transitioning from high school into the workforce and/or college. See Attachment 4.8(b)(2) for more .
- OVRs continued to partner with three community colleges in carrying out the Career Workforce Skills Training Project. This project allows students and adults with disabilities to receive "hands on" training as an alternative to formal academic training.
- OVRs regional offices worked with 13 community colleges in Oregon to provide a variety of academic and vocational programs to assist clients in acquiring the necessary skills to be competitive in the local or state labor market.
- OVRs continued to partner with the Oregon School for the Deaf to ensure the school's pupils are able to access vocational rehabilitation services.
- OVRs staff continued to serve on cross-agency committees responsible for sharing information about services to youth and families, including:
  - DHS Child Welfare Advisory Committee
  - Independent Living Program Strategic Planning Committee
  - Department of Education Transition Advisory Committee
  - State Advisory Council on Special Education
  - Modified Diploma Task Force
  - State Youth Committee
  - Tillamook County Commission on Children and Families

**Sub-Goal B. Expand partnerships with state and local workforce investment boards as well as private sector employers**

- In partnership with the Employment Department (ED), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD), OVRs continued to provide training and technical assistance to each of Oregon's 15 regions in the development of 2007-2008 Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) and updated Memorandums of Understandings (MOUs).
- OVRs continued to serve on the Oregon Workforce Policy Cabinet in order to promote and advance competitive employment of persons with disabilities through Oregon's workforce investment system. The cabinet includes representation from state agencies and programs responsible for or concerned with economic development, higher education, community colleges and workforce services, employment and TANF.
- OVRs counselors and Employment Department business account representatives continued to their collaborative efforts to maximize use of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and other strategies through which employers may leverage better relationships with their employers.
- OVRs participated in Region X's Employer Development Network and monitored the U.S. Department of Labor's business group activities.
- OVRs participated in CSAVR-NET and obtained and provided information about employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities with national businesses and the federal government.

**Sub-Goal C. Expand employment partnerships with Tribal entities, African American, Hispanic and Asian populations**

- Utilizing innovation and expansion funds, OVRs continued to fund and utilize the Latino Connection in targeting Hispanic individuals who might not otherwise seek OVRs services. The Latino Connection provides culturally and linguistically appropriate case coordination and job development services in the Portland and Salem metropolitan areas. The Latino Connection also funds a workgroup to address barriers to services to Hispanic persons.
- OVRs supported and collaborated with the 121 programs of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and Warm Springs through a number of initiatives and activities, including:
  - Counselors from the 121 program were invited and attended OVRs trainings, including OVRs' new counselor training, OVRs' annual statewide in-service training conference, and trainings on medical aspects of disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries.
  - OVRs provided office space at its Bend branch for a representative from the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs to meet with tribal members.
  - Both 121 programs are represented on the State Rehabilitation Council. In addition, the Grand Ronde Tribe serves on the State Independent Living Council, while the Warm Springs Tribes has an appointment pending.
  - OVRs participated in the Native American Program sponsored by Western Oregon University and Chemeketa Community College, which supports tribal enrollees in completing an Associate of Arts Degree in Social Services.
  - OBLN and OVRs partnered with the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs to plan an employer symposium on "The Coming Labor Shortage: What it Means for Oregon and Essential Strategies for your Business to Compete".

**Sub-Goal D. Better coordination of workforce and vocational rehabilitation programs so that people with disabilities have better access to and are better prepared for employment opportunities**

- OVRs continued to participate in the Systems Cooperative Workgroup between OVRs, Oregon Commission for the Blind and Oregon Community Colleges for the exchange of information and concerns. OVRs has plans to replicate this successful collaborative approach with the Oregon University system.
- OVRs continued to collaborate with the Oregon Workforce Investment System to update Local Workforce Investment Areas' local strategic unifying plans and contracts, memoranda of understanding and resource sharing agreements.
- OVRs continued to assess the training needs of workforce partners located in Employment Department offices and one-stops at the local level and provide any needed training.
- OVRs expanded employment partnerships through other activities, including maintenance and expansion of its linkages with the Department of Transportation and Oregon's building trades in order to avail clients of apprenticeship opportunities, and utilization of CSAVR-NET to obtain information about job opportunities for clients with national businesses and the federal government. See activities of OVRs Employer Services Coordinator in Goal 1.A. above for more.

**GOAL 4. INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF PEOPLE SERVED, STAFF AND SERVICE PROVIDERS**

The percent of Hispanic persons served by OVRs in FFY 2007 declined by two percent from those served in FFY 2006. Over these same years, the percent of African Americans increased by ten percent, while the percent of American Indians remained constant.

**Sub-Goal A. Better access to and improved service from vocational rehabilitation services by people with significant disabilities and those from racial, ethnic, or cultural minority groups**

- The primary focus of most OVRS/OCEP initiatives is on groups of individuals with significant disabilities, including but not limited to persons with psychiatric disabilities and persons with significant developmental disabilities. The Oregon Competitive Employment Project is the OVRS administered Medicaid Infrastructure Grant-funded systems-change initiative that seeks to increase competitive employment of persons with disabilities. For more on OCEP see Attachment 6.3.
- OVRS continued to recruit Spanish-speaking bilingual, bicultural counselors.
- OVRS continued to fund the Latino Connection to target Hispanic individuals who might not otherwise seek OVRS services. The Latino Connection provides culturally and linguistically appropriate case coordination and job development services in the Portland and Salem metropolitan areas. The Latino Connection also funds a workgroup that addresses barriers to services to Hispanic persons.
- OVRS continued outreach activities to:
  - Russian and Ukrainian communities, in cooperation with the Immigration and Refugee Community Organization.
  - Indian youth with disabilities and provision of specialized services to empower their transition to suitable work.
  - OVRS continued to use alternate communication formats in its offices and support their use in other Department of Human Services programs and in One-Stop Centers. See Goals 2.B. and C. above and Attachment 4.10 for more.

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- OVRs continued efforts with Western Oregon University and Portland State University to increase their recruitment of minority applicants for their rehabilitation counseling education programs.
- OVRs continued to assist consumers of corrections and community reentry programs, including its work with Better People, a project focused on providing cognitive-behavioral Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT), job placement and job retention services to unemployed and underemployed adult offenders with disabilities in the Portland Metropolitan Area.

**ATTACHMENT 6.3**  
**Quality, Scope and Extent of**  
**Supported Employment Services**

Supported employment is a major OVRS initiative. OVRS' supported employment program provides opportunities for individuals with the most significant disabilities to achieve competitive employment in integrated settings with ongoing support provided by a variety of partners. These same individuals are those for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred. OVRS provides a continuum of supported employment services and, in partnership with other human services agencies and programs, the continuing supports that persons with the most significant disabilities need to develop, maintain and advance in competitive employment.

**QUALITY OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

In general, the quality of an OVRS supported employment plan is evaluated to insure that it complies with defining criteria of supported employment:

- Work is performed in an integrated setting that provides regular interactions with individuals who do not have disabilities, other than caregivers.
- The individual is receiving a wage commensurate with non-disabled workers doing the same work.
- The ongoing support needs and sources of support have been identified and secured.
- Supported employment services provided to clients are for the maximum number of hours possible, based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- Clients and employer are satisfied with placements.

OVRS has aligned with the Addictions and Mental Health Division (AMH) in promoting individualized Placement and Support (IPS), an evidence-based supported employment model. Quality of these programs is assessed through compliance with a fidelity scale. The scale measures the "fidelity" or the degree to

which a program is being implemented in accordance to the program design. Some of the measures used in the fidelity scales are the kinds of employment outcomes participants are obtaining; the degree of collaboration with vocational rehabilitation; availability of rapid job search and evidence of consumer choice. OVRs maintains quality supported employment outcomes through ongoing collaboration with mental health providers on the local level and SMH central office staff.

### **SCOPE OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

In FFY 2007, OVRs provided supported employment services to 656 individuals with significant disabilities, including persons with psychiatric disabilities, mental illness, developmental disabilities and/or traumatic brain injuries. During this same period, 204 individuals who received supported employment services entered competitive employment, and 323 individuals continued to participate in their supported employment IPEs. Overall, the number of persons receiving supported employment services decreased by 10 percent from FFY 2006,

### **Supported Employment for Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities**

OVRs continues to work to make evidence-based mental health supported employment services available throughout Oregon.

#### Background

The agency's efforts in this area were initiated nearly ten years ago, when OVRs, through its field offices in the Portland metropolitan area and Grants Pass in southern Oregon, began to collaborate with local mental health programs and AMH, and Portland State University, to provide evidence-based supported employment services to individuals with psychiatric disabilities being served by OVRs.

In 2002, OVRs and AMH sought to expand the availability of evidence-based mental health supported employment services and initiated a project in Jackson, Douglas and Polk counties with Options of Southern Oregon, a community-based mental health provider. This project was aided by a three year grant from Dartmouth College/Johnson & Johnson Community Mental Health Project to

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support the implementation of individualized placement and support, an evidence-based model of supported employment.

Although the Johnson and Johnson grant funding ended in 2005, OVRS and AMH continued to support and fund the efforts of Options and Life Works. This same year, OVRS was awarded a four-year Medicaid Infrastructure Grant with which to operate the Oregon Competitive Employment Project (OCEP), a systems-change initiative charged with increasing the competitive employment of persons with disabilities. OCEP subsequently identified expansion of the availability of supported employment as one of its primary objectives.

#### Recent Activities

In 2006, OVRS, OCEP and AMH sought to address its supported employment objective through provision of mini-grants to Clackamas, Crook, Deschutes, Multnomah, Malheur, Umatilla and Washington counties, with the intent of stimulating and perpetuating the development of evidence-based supported employment services. Concomitantly, OCEP subsidized supported employment training and facilitated provision of technical assistance through Options of Southern Oregon and Life Works Northwest. As part of this effort, OVRS, OCEP and AMH have and continue to seek long-term funding for evidence-based supported employment services.

In 2007, OVRS continued to partner with the Addictions and Mental Health Division (AMH) in providing evidence-based supported employment services through OVRS field offices and community-based mental health programs. In addition, OVRS, OCEP and AMD continued to support statewide and local initiatives to expand and sustain the availability of evidence-based supported employment services:

- Options for Southern Oregon was provided with innovation and expansion activity funding to provide placement and support services in competitive jobs to OVRS clients with severe psychiatric disabilities living in Josephine County.

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- Life Works Northwest was provided with innovation and expansion activity funding to provide placement and supports for competitive jobs for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who live in Washington County. The program increased the number of individuals closing with a competitive rehabilitation from 12 in FFY 2006 to 37 in FFY 2007.
- OVRs/OCEP, utilizing Medicaid Infrastructure Grant Funds, provided mini-grants to Deschutes, Josephine, Malheur, Marion, and Washington Counties to assist them in planning, providing and evaluating services, and in obtaining needed technical assistance from Options for Southern Oregon.
- OVRs, OCEP and AMH also:
  - Continued to subsidize training events and mini-conferences on supported employment. Over 70 mental health and vocational rehabilitation providers from seven counties participated in these events.
  - Developed a “Center for Excellence” on evidence-based supported employment. The center, which became operational in December 2007, provides leadership, training and technical assistance on supported employment.
  - Collaborated on a strategy to provide evidence-based supported employment services to non-Medicaid eligible indigent individuals with a mental health diagnosis.

These efforts notwithstanding, the absence of sufficient and continuing funding for evidence-based supported employment continues to limit the availability of supported employment services to persons with psychiatric disabilities.

**Supported Employment for Persons with Developmental Disabilities**

OVRs partners with the Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Division (SPD), its Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS) and others, including support services brokerages (DD brokerages), county case managers,

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rehabilitation service providers and advocates in providing supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities.

In 2003, OVRS and SPD began to actively partner in serving and supporting persons with developmental disabilities affected by the Staley settlement. This agreement, prompted by a federal lawsuit, requires the state to provide qualified persons with developmental disabilities with access to certain community services, including supported employment.

From 2004 to 2006, OVRS and SPD funded and developed local supported employment teams, comprised of DD brokerage and OVRS field staff. These teams meet and exchange information, solve problems and coordinate local activities, with the intent of increasing provision of supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities. In implementing this initiative, OVRS and SPD:

- Provided planning materials, training and ongoing technical assistance to the local teams.
- Developed, disseminated and utilized a “Supported Employment Toolkit with Guidelines for OVRS Field and Support Services Brokerage Staff” (Toolkit).
- Surveyed DD brokerages and OVRS branch offices in order to assist the teams in promoting quality services for DD brokerage/OVRS clients.

In FFY 2007, OVRS and SPD worked to update the supported employment toolkit.

OVRS and SPD have worked to expand supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities in other capacities:

- In 2006, OVRS/OCEP funded the first year of SPD’s participation in the Supported Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a state and national effort to renew and expand state supported employment services to persons with developmental disabilities. OVRS/OCEP staff have since joined the

SPD work group responsible for implementing SPD's strategic plan for implementing SELN in Oregon. The focus of that plan is on:

- Developing and implementing rate reimbursement policies and practices that support competitive employment of individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Refining the data collection tools and analysis done on supported employment outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Expanding participation on existing local supported employment teams.
- Developing on-going training and technical assistance to front line employment consultants, including job developers.

More recently, OVRs and SPD management have initiated discussions about how SPD intends to roll out these initiatives, aligning and coordinating services across their two systems.

- OVRs/OCEP has joined an SPD work group in identifying and developing needed employment policy on supported employment services for persons with developmental disabilities.

### **Supported Employment for Persons with Traumatic Brain Injuries**

OVRs continues to provide supported employment services to persons with traumatic brain injuries (TBI). Using the Center for Disease Control estimates, the Brain Injury Association of Oregon (BIAOR) calculates that there are over 72,000 individuals in Oregon living with a brain injury; that each year over 17,000 individuals in the state will sustain a brain injury; and that over 8,500 of these individuals will sustain a short-term disability or more.

In FFY 2007, OVRs/OCEP continued the partnership they initiated with BIAOR in 2006 and continued their efforts to:

- Establish a registry for accurately determining the number of individuals in Oregon who acquire or sustain a TBI.

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- Develop a statewide supported employment model for individuals with TBI and identification of sustainable funding sources.

In addition, OCEP and BIAOR:

- Assisted OVRS branches in acquiring obtaining Brain Injury Recovery Kits.
- Facilitated provision of training on TBI to OVRS counseling staff through the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Pacific Northwest Brain Injury Conference.

**Other Supported Employment Developments and Activities**

Also in FFY 2007:

- OVRS continued to consult with SPD and AMH about OCEP's Work Incentives Network (WIN), as OCEP has moved from planning to implementing WIN.
- OVRS, SPD, AMH continued to explore how to implement the long anticipated new Ticket to Work regulations in Oregon and best use the regulations and Ticket revenue provide long term support services to persons with developmental and psychiatric disabilities.
- OVRS and allied DHS programs and their counterparts from four other states participated in a two-day state-federal policy exchange organized by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Policy. Federal participants included representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Labor, Health Resources and Services Administration, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Social Security Administration and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. State and federal partners shared strategies for increasing

employment, retention and promotion of workers with disabilities and recommended future federal policies, resources and priorities that would support a competitive employment infrastructure.

### **EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

Supported employment is integrated into the array of services and programs available to Oregonians with disabilities, including Oregon's mental health and developmental disability service systems. Success in supported employment requires a partnership among involved state and community agencies and programs, other service providers, consumers and families, advocacy organizations, employers and others. Long-term success will depend on identifying adequate and continuing funding for follow-along supported employment services.

OQRS utilizes Title VI, Part B and Title I funds for the time-limited services necessary for an individual to stabilize in a community-based job. Services that may be part of a supported employment IPE include:

- Person-centered planning.
- Community-based assessment.
- Job development.
- Job placement.
- On-site training for worker and/or co-workers.
- Long-term support development.
- Other services and goods.
- Post-employment services.

The specific type, level and location of ongoing supports provided to an individual are based upon his or her needs and those of the employer. Ongoing support may be provided by variety of public and/or private sector resources including:

- AMH and community mental health programs.
- SPD/OHCS' community supports.

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- County developmental disability case managers and developmental disability service brokerages.
- Social Security work incentives.
- Employer-provided reasonable accommodations.
- Natural supports.
- Family or community sponsorship.

**TIMING OF THE TRANSITION TO EXTENDED SERVICES**

Generally, OVRS will not exceed its 18 month in plan status with a supported employment case. This 18 month timeline can be extended for exceptional circumstances, if the counselor and client jointly agree to the extension. Job coaching and/or on the job training supports are usually structured into a much shorter timeframe, with long term extended services being built into the plan as quickly as possible to ensure ongoing success when OVRS involvement ends.